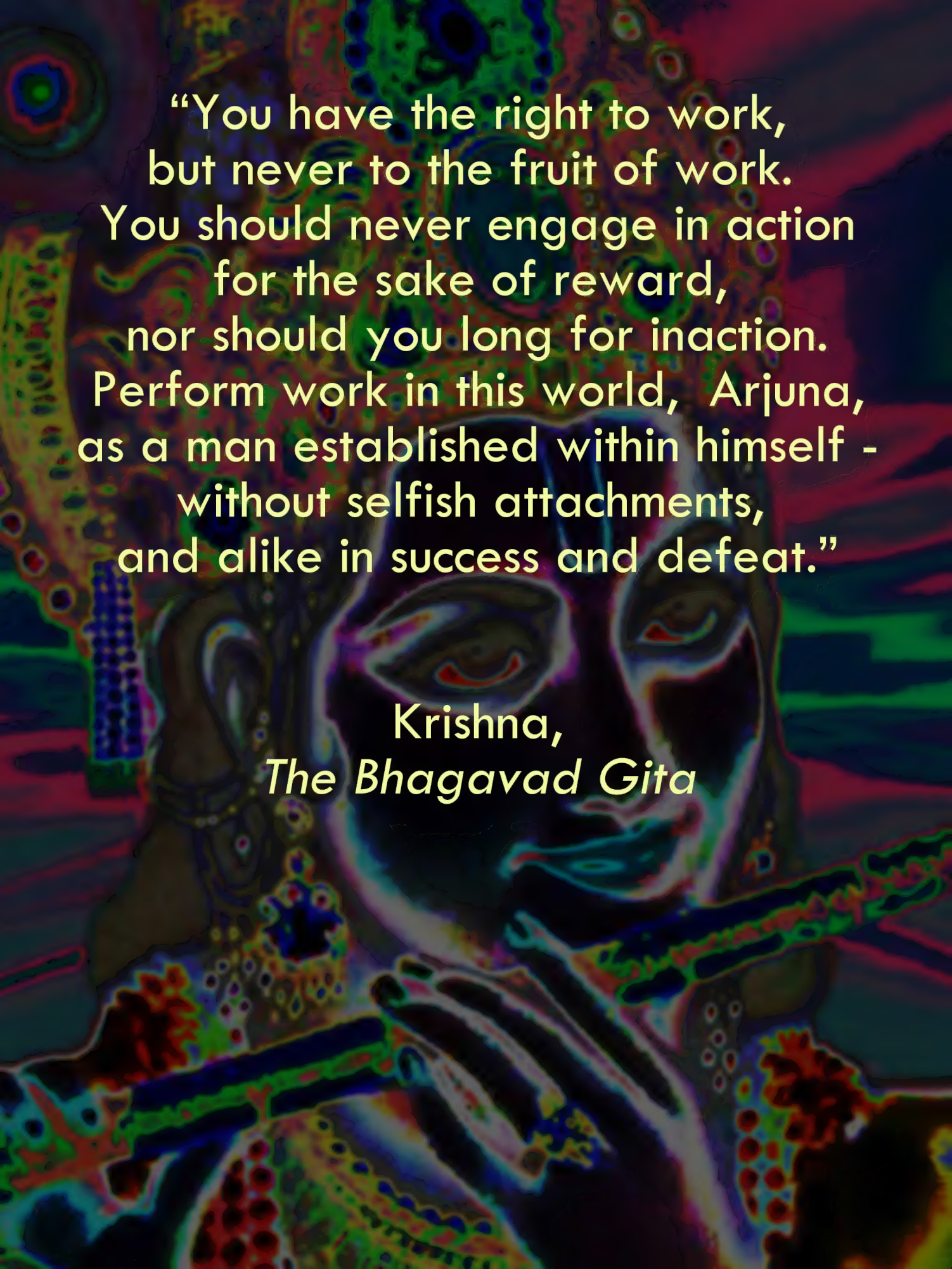
A NEW KIND OF MONEY

A Manual for Americans
and Other Prisoners of
the Nation State

Adam Savage


"You have the right to work,
but never to the fruit of work.
You should never engage in action
for the sake of reward,
nor should you long for inaction.
Perform work in this world, Arjuna,
as a man established within himself -
without selfish attachments,
and alike in success and defeat."
Krishna,
The Bhagavad Gita

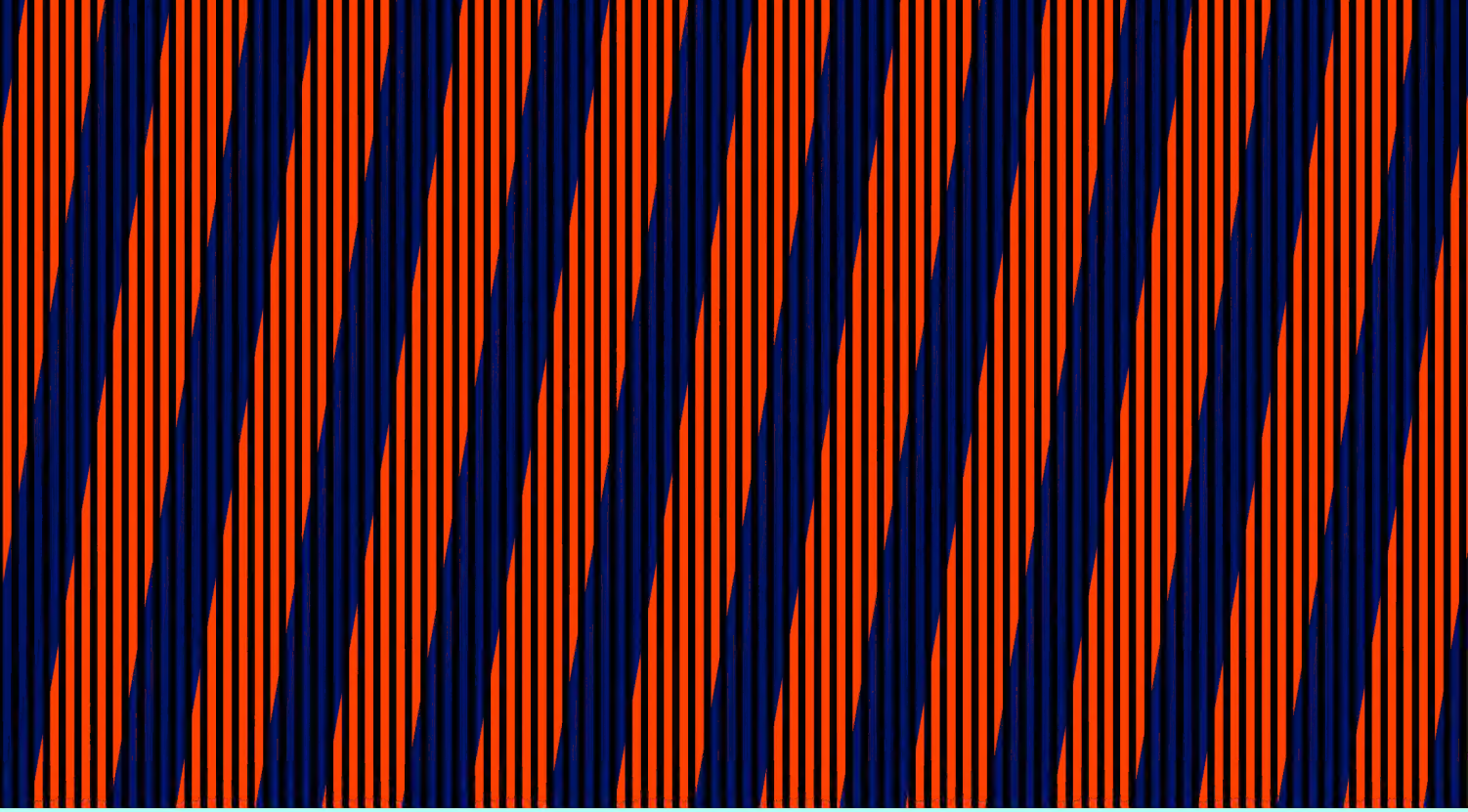
STEP RIGHT UP!

THE MOST UNUSUAL LIFE-LENGTH EPIC YOU'VE EVER THRILLED TO...

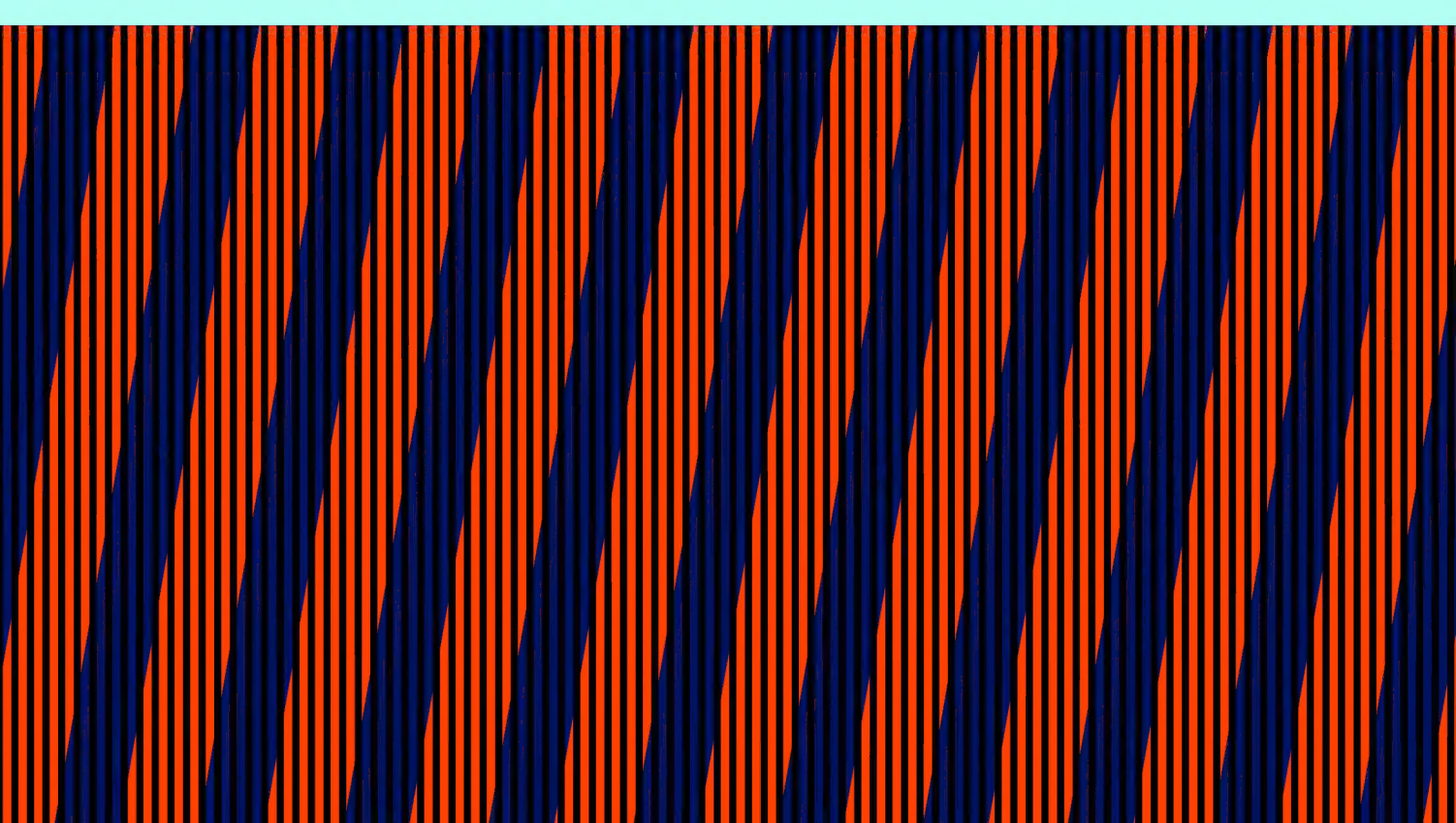
A SIMPLE SELF-TEACHING ENCYCLOPEDIA™

FILL THE GAPS IN YOUR FAMILY'S EDUCATION WITH ONE SIMPLE CHUNK OF INTERNET DETRITUS...

A TALE SO POWERFUL THAT ONLY NOBEL-PRIZE WINNER ADAM SAVAGE COULD BRING IT TO YOU!

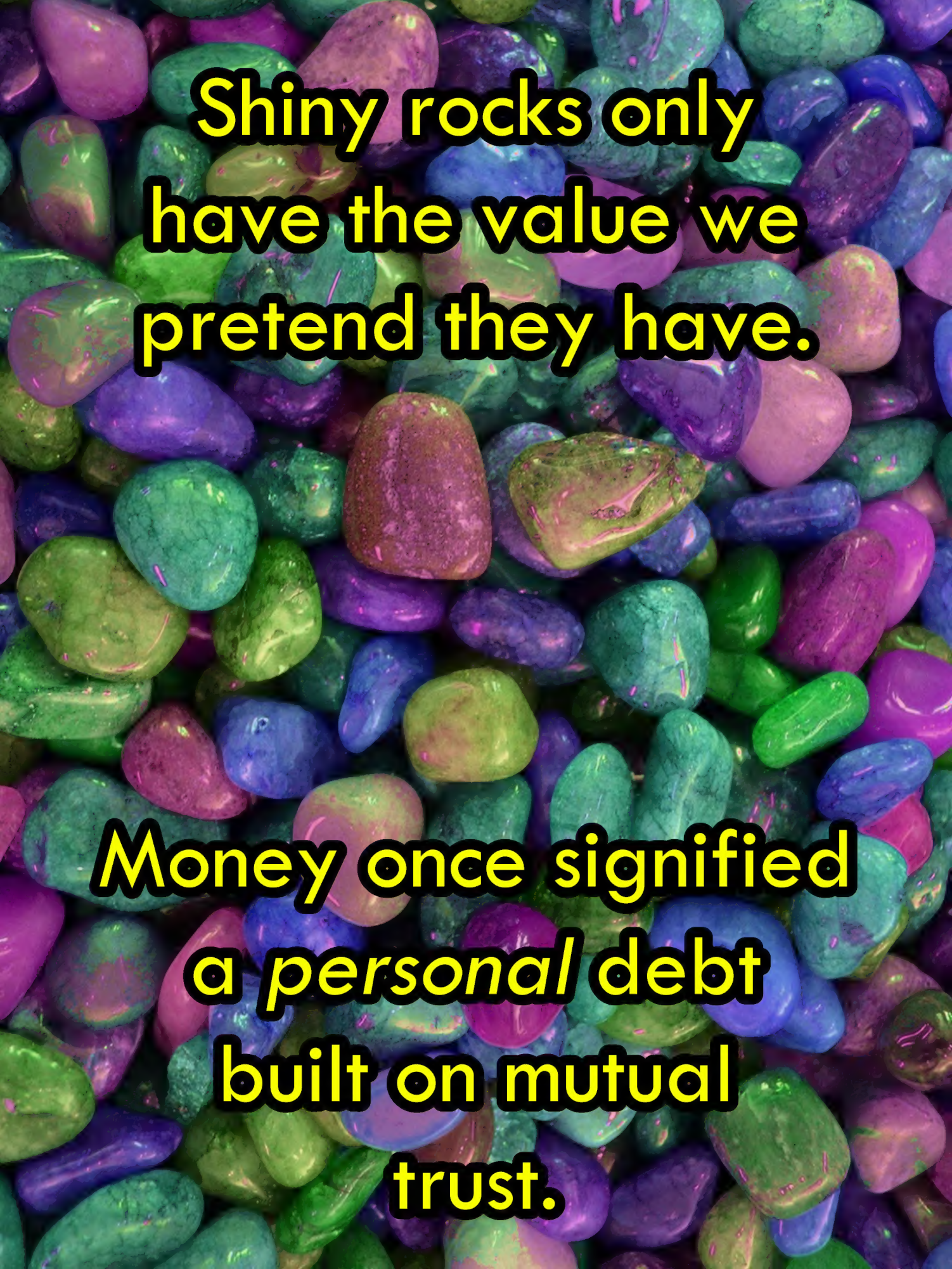


Tell me...



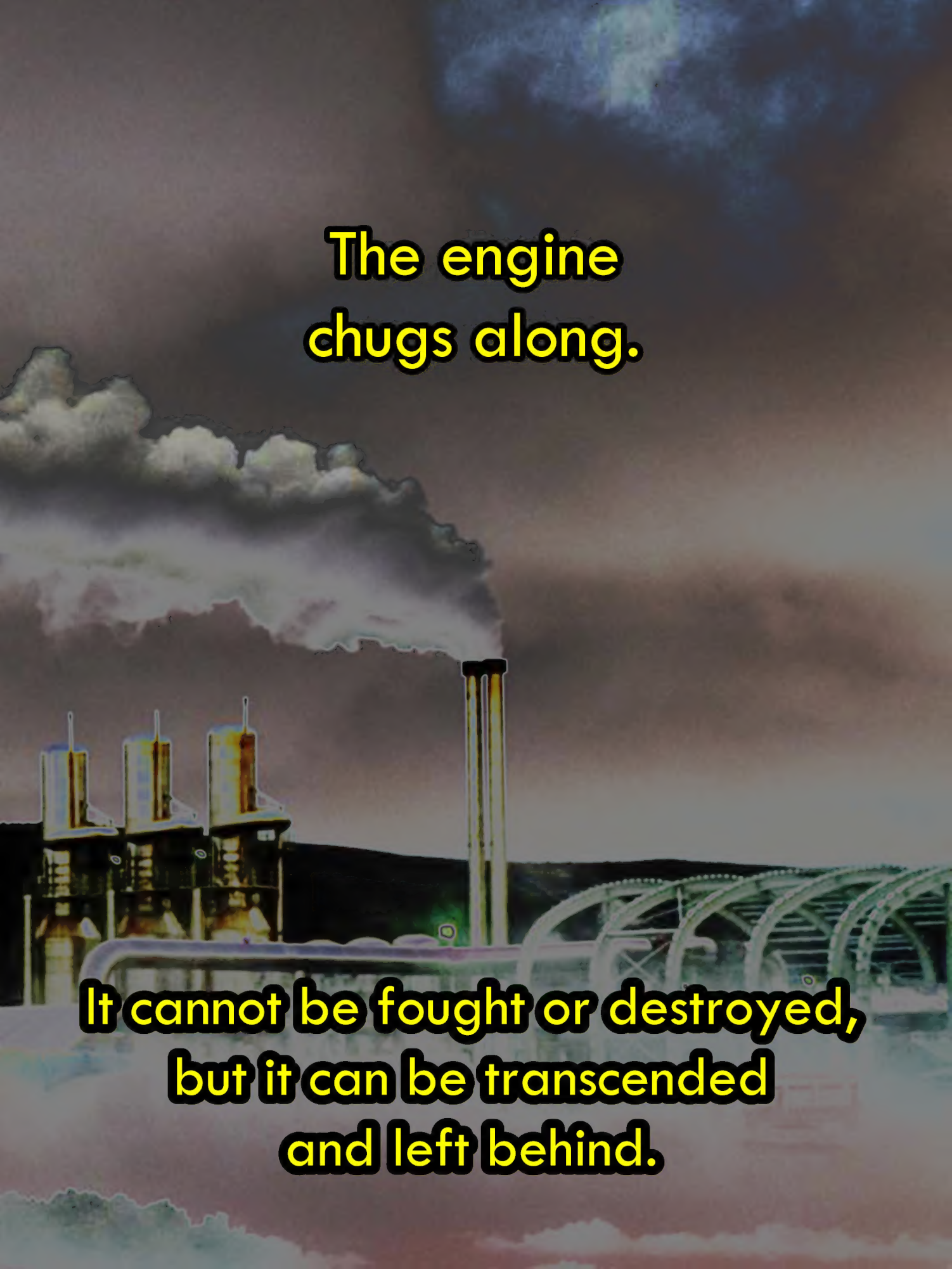
WHAT
IS
MONEY

ONE
ONE
ONE
ONE
We CREATED money.


Shiny rocks only have the value we pretend they have.
Money once signified a *personal* debt built on mutual trust.

What trust do you have for your bank or credit card company?

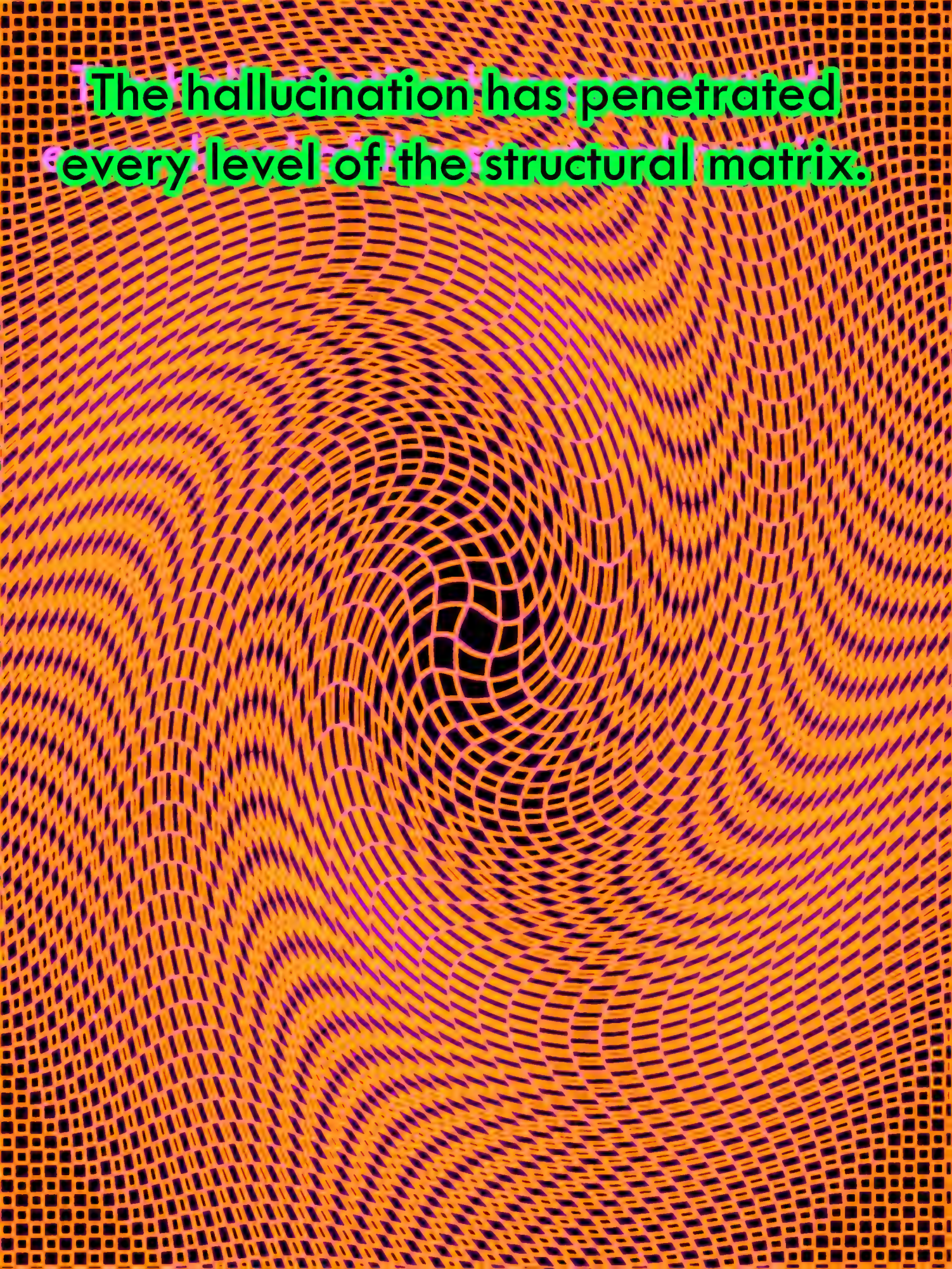
Wells Fargo Settlements Since
Financial Crisis
WELLS FARGO
• $185 million for fraudulent customer accounts (2016)
• $1.2 billion for civil mortgage fraud (2016)
• $53 million for credit union mortgage loan losses (2015)
• $4 million for identity protection and debt cancellation product practices (2015)


The engine
chugs along.
It cannot be fought or destroyed,
but it can be transcended
and left behind.

Yes, we created money.

But that means it is a process subject to change and improvement.

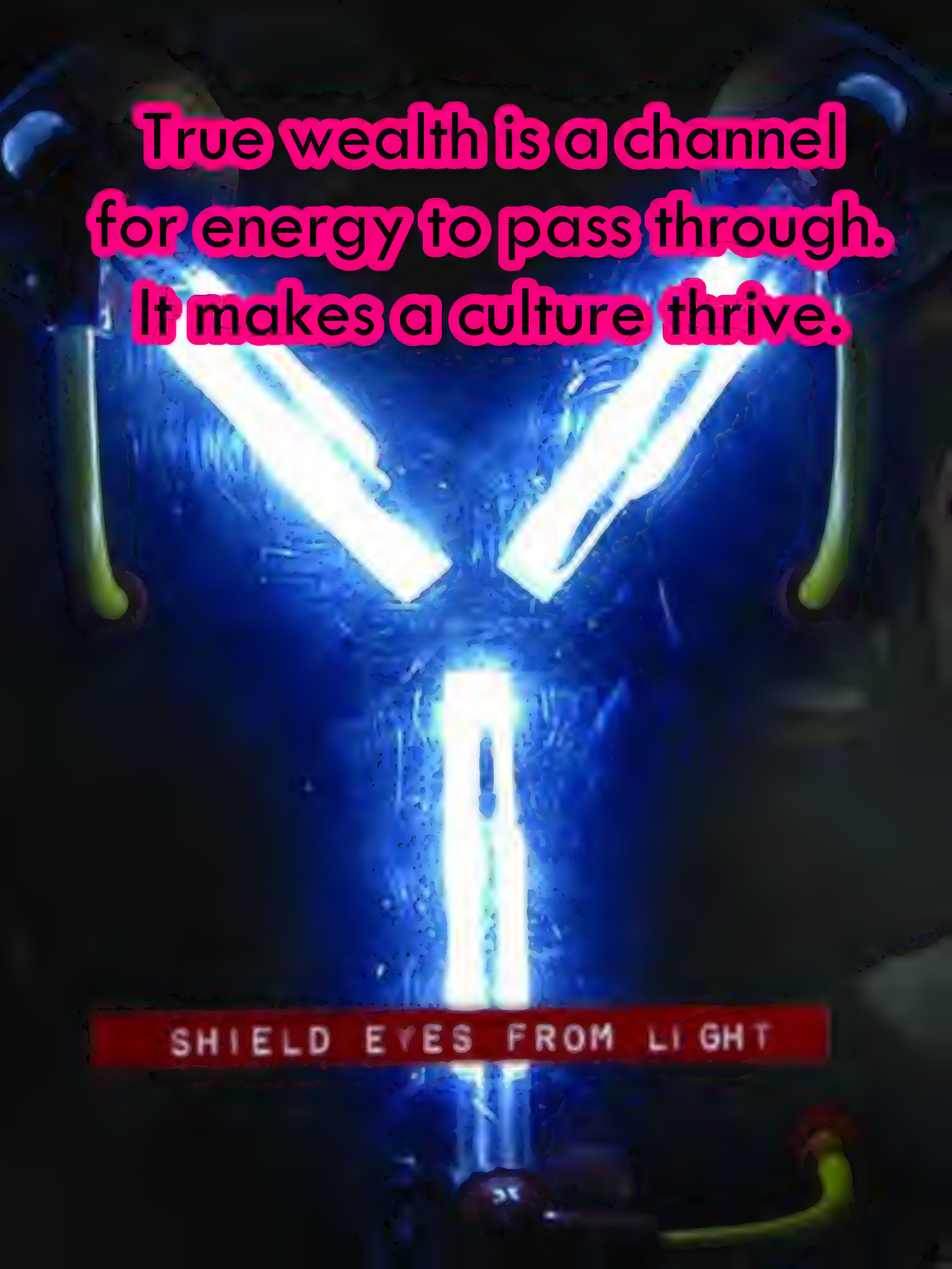
It was meant to help us interact.
Now it is more likely to constrict.
Wealth is accumulated by fewer and fewer individuals and corporations, and then stockpiled in increasingly complicated investment vehicles.


The hallucination has penetrated
every level of the structural matrix.

If wealth ossifies a culture,
it is not wealth.
Thus fell the Roman Empire.

But if we created money,
we can *reinvent* it.

We can use it to foster
community interaction,
and help one another.

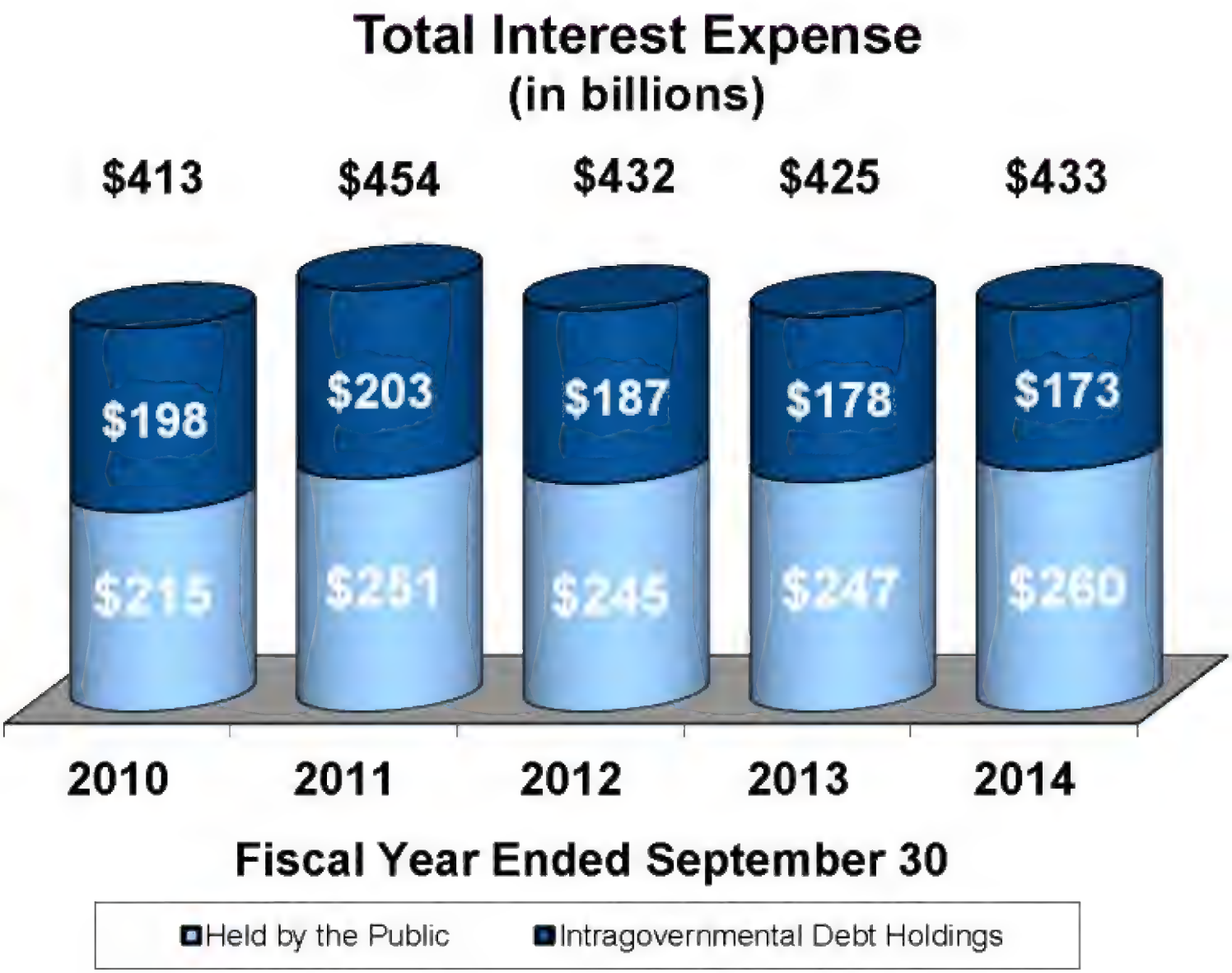

True wealth is a channel
for energy to pass through.
It makes a culture thrive.
SHIELD EYES FROM LIGHT

Some numbers,
s'il vous plaît.

THE U.S. NATIONAL DEBT:

Each year, hundreds of billions are spent to keep the debt at bay. Tax payers receive zero benefit from these interest payments.

Payments in recent years:



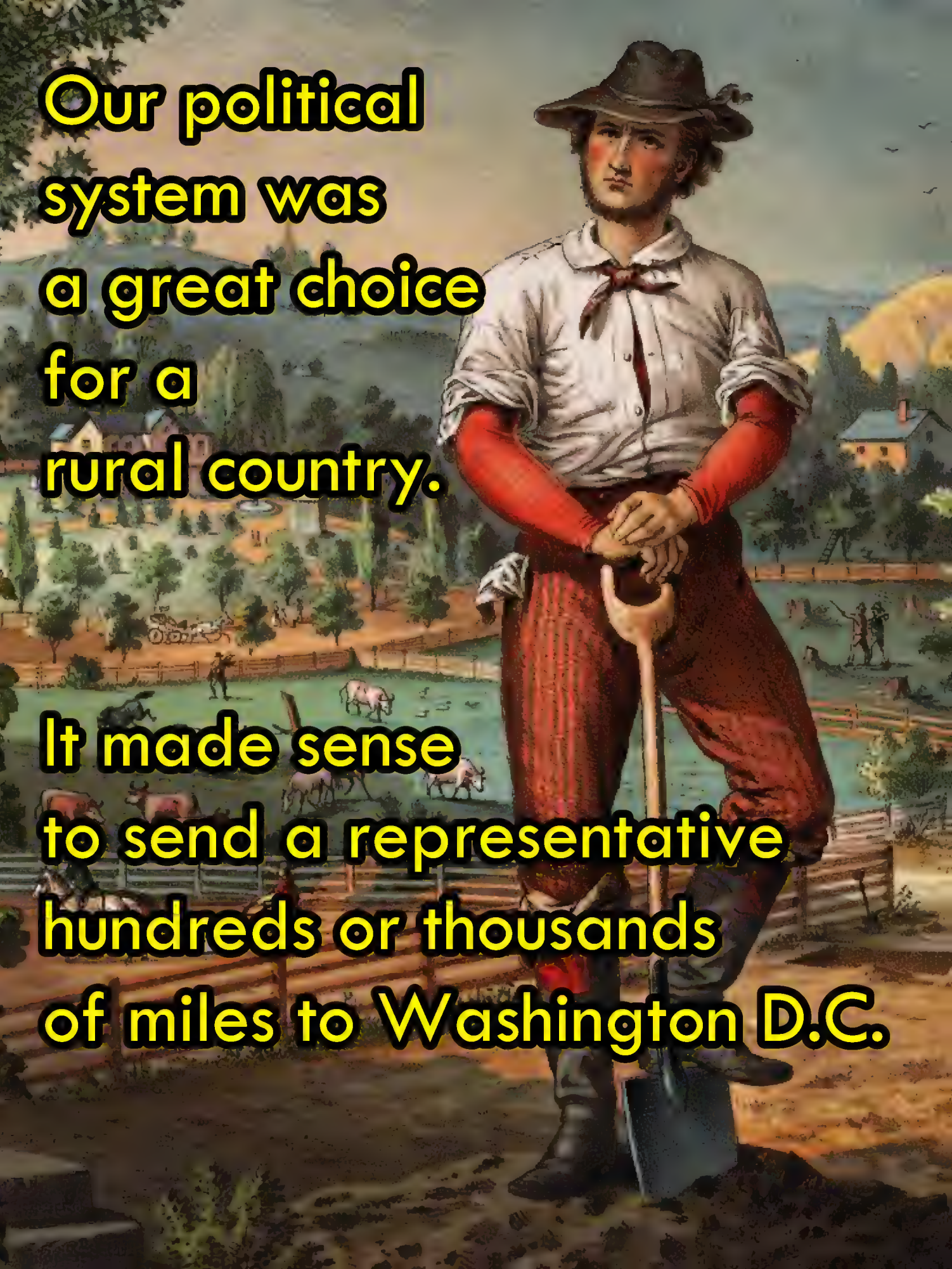
How do we shift our energy
from war and stagnation...
...to education,
healthcare,
and vitality?

The U.S. is a vast country, a divided people, operating as a *kluge*.

2016 Presidential election results by County

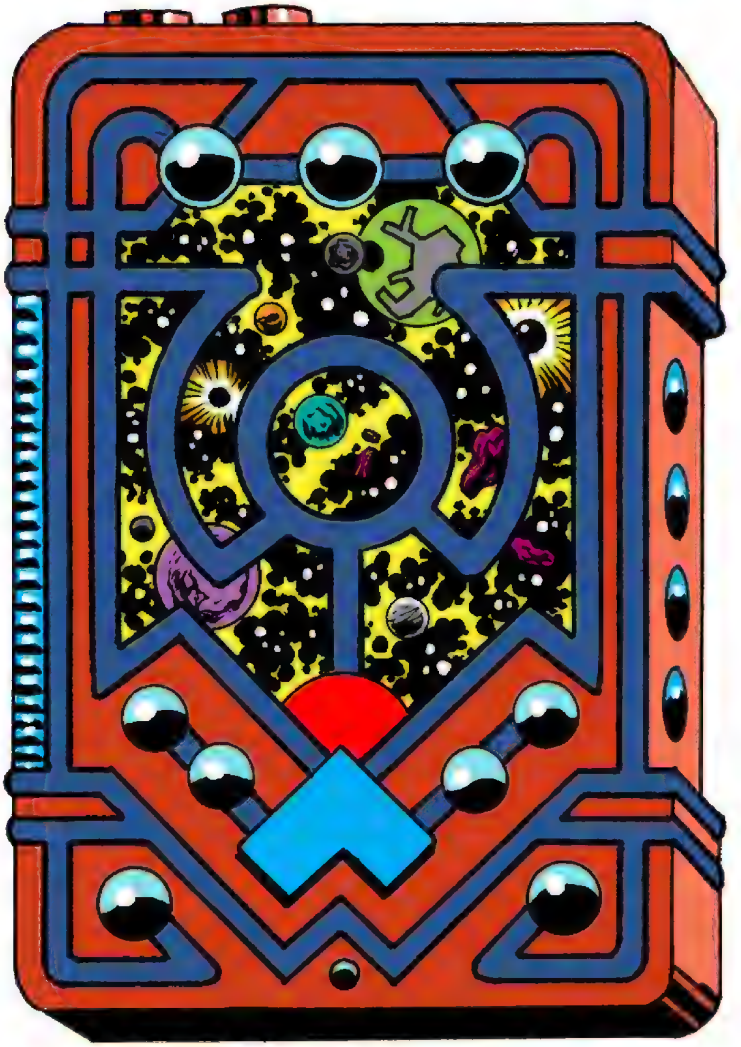
A **kludge** (or **kluge**) (/klʌdʒ/, /klu:ʒ/, /klu:dʒ/) is a workaround or quick-and-dirty solution that is clumsy, inelegant, inefficient, difficult to extend and hard to maintain. This term is used in diverse fields such as computer science, aerospace engineering, internet slang, evolutionary neuroscience, and government.

How did this
come to be?


Our political system was a great choice for a rural country.
It made sense to send a representative hundreds or thousands of miles to Washington D.C.

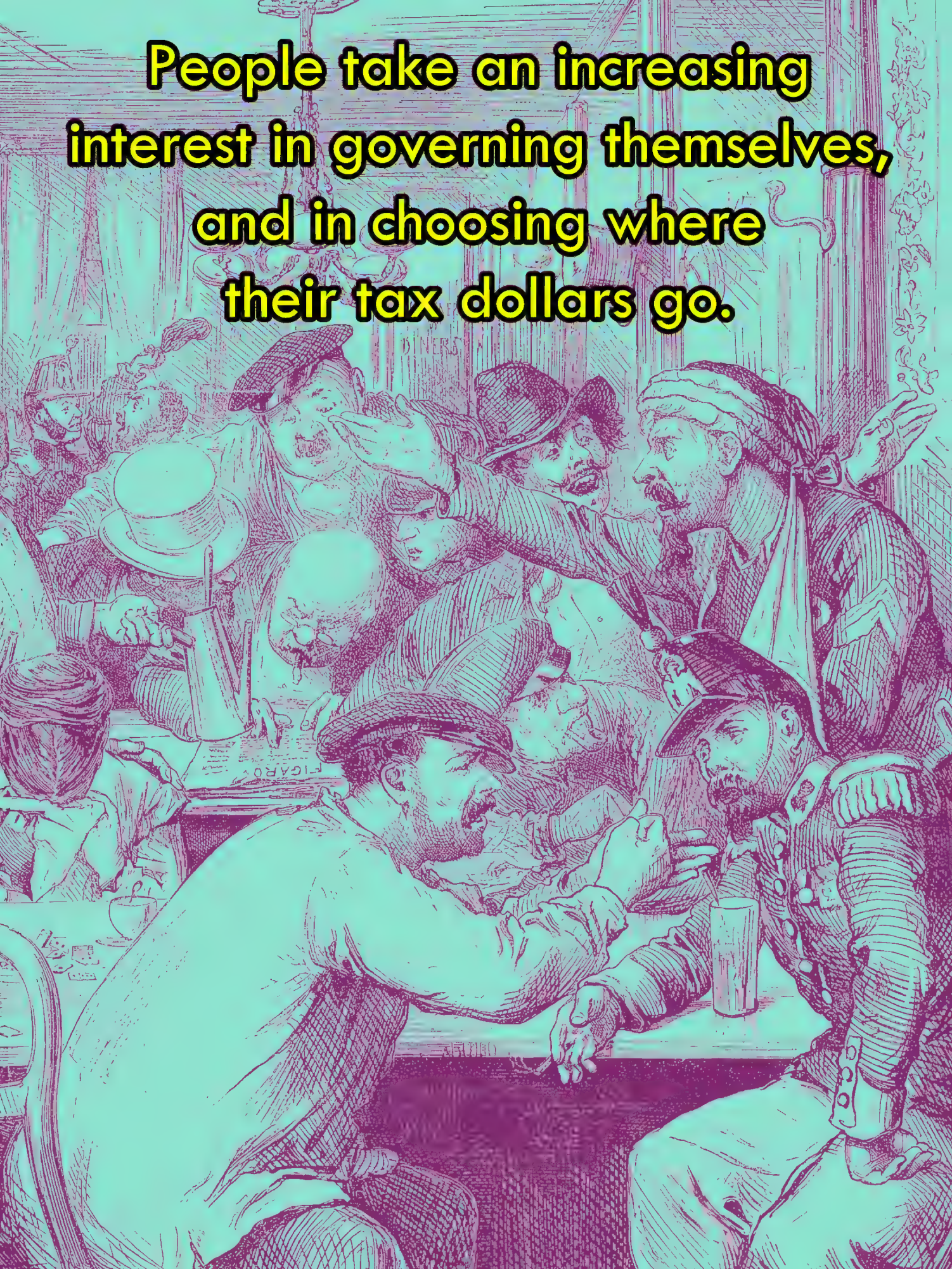
BUT NO LONGER.

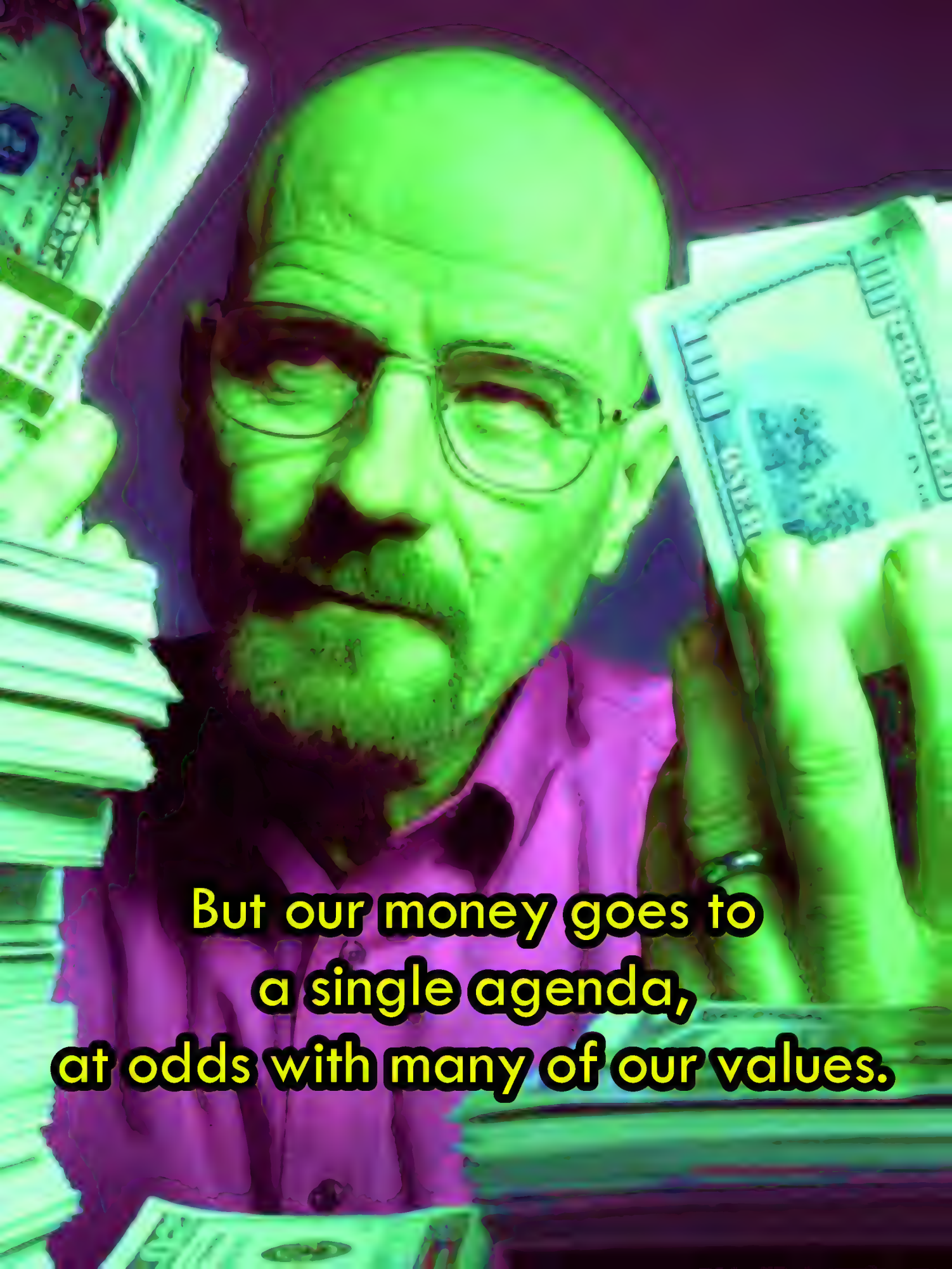
PING! PING! PING!



NOW THE WORLD IS

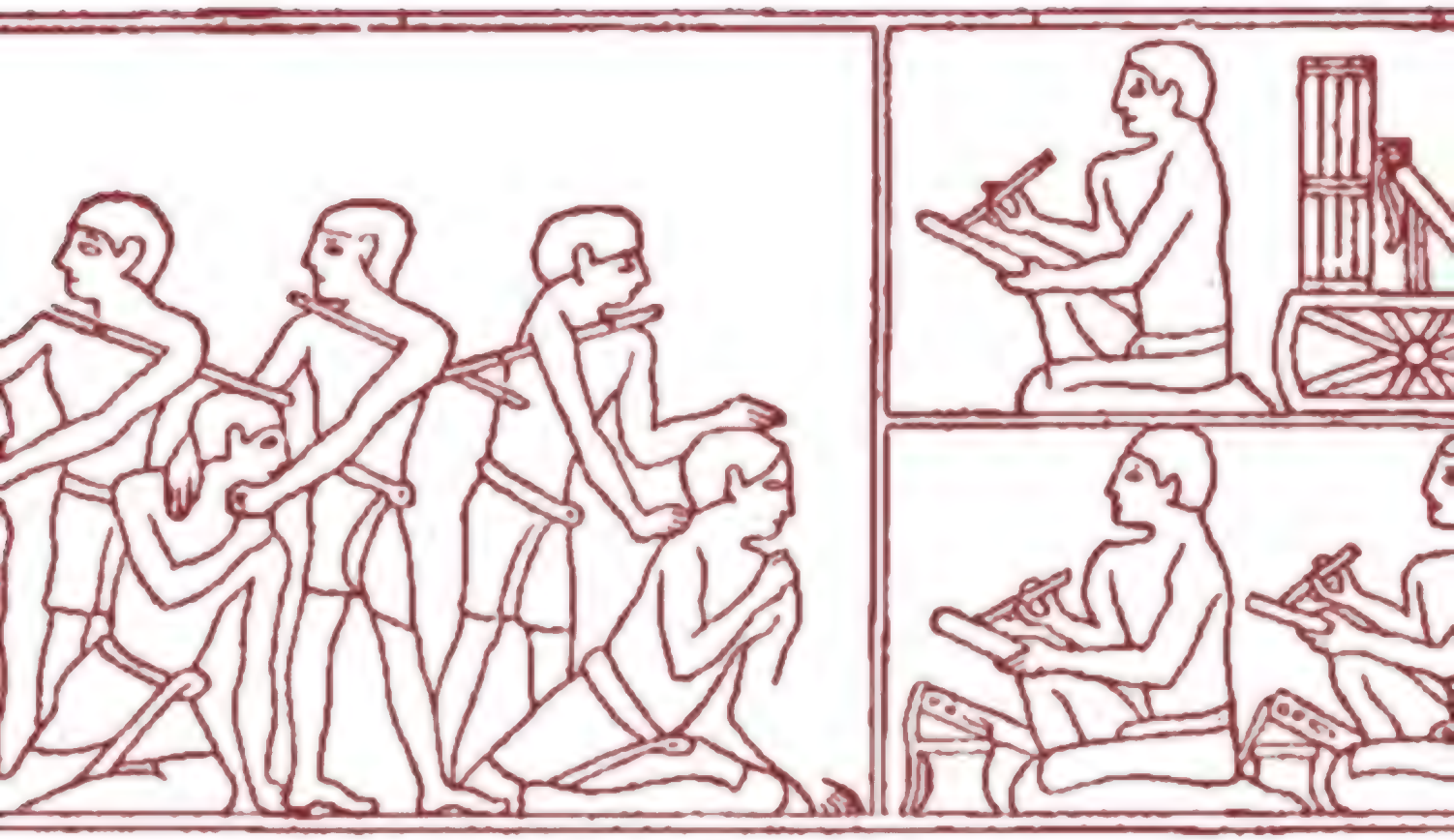
INSTANTANEOUS.


People take an increasing interest in governing themselves, and in choosing where their tax dollars go.


But our money goes to
a single agenda,
at odds with many of our values.

F 2365-01
F 2365-01
BOOM.

You can stop supporting
goverment by refusing
to pay your taxes.



But that is a crime.

May I suggest a better solution than tax resistance?

(Yes, I can. This is my pamphletto.)

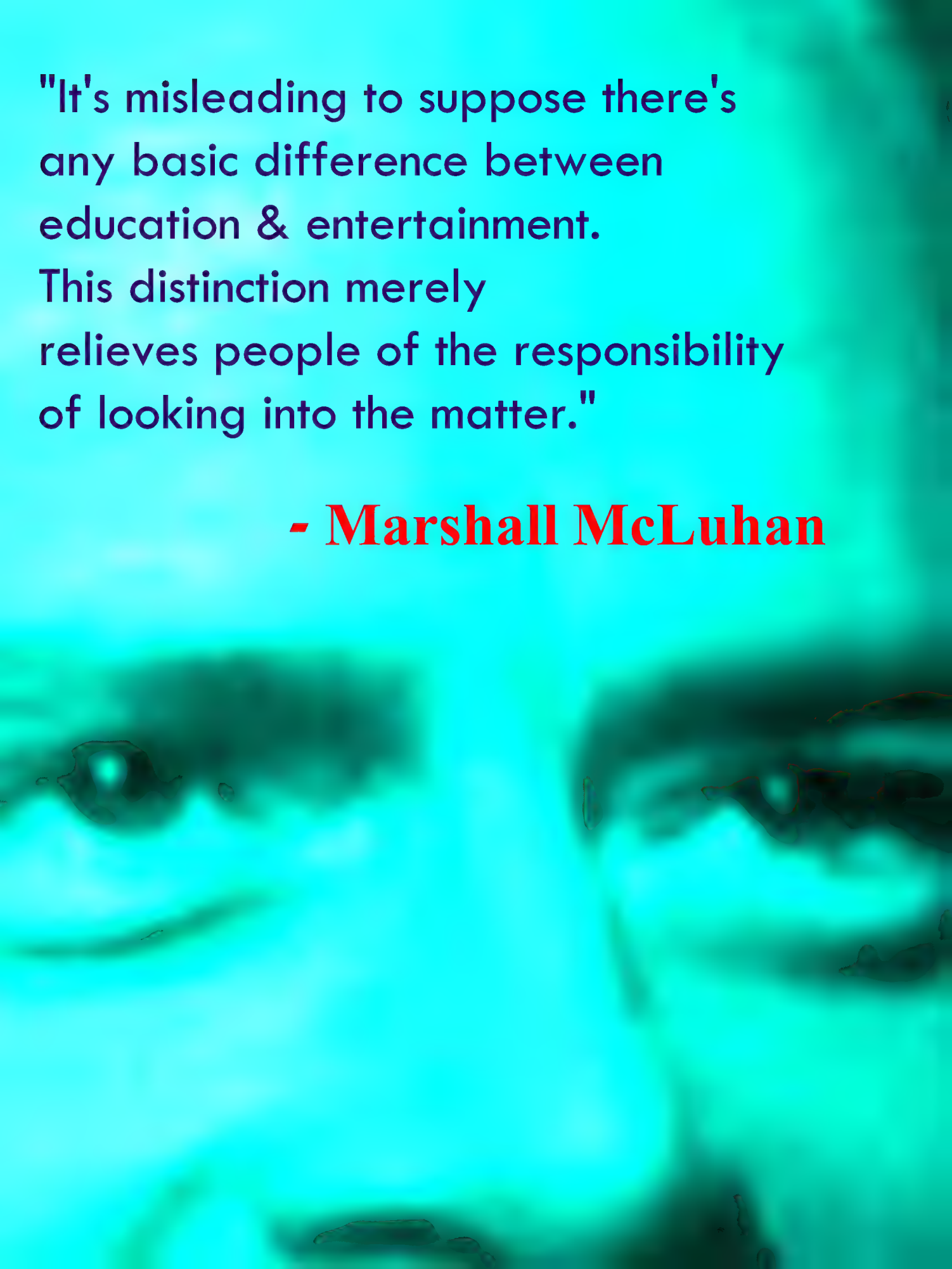
What if we made learning the basis of a new economy?

HOW WOULD THIS WORK?
GREAT QUESTION! THANKS FOR ASKING.

Education is the most powerful weapon we can use to change the world.
- Nelson Mandela

"It's misleading to suppose there's
any basic difference between
education & entertainment.
This distinction merely
relieves people of the responsibility
of looking into the matter."

- Marshall McLuhan



FUN.
WOW! KEWL!
OOOOOOOOOHHHHHHH
THANKS TO THE WEB, A GREAT DEAL OF EDUCATION MAY BE OBTAINED ONLINE!

But we can't underestimate
the importance of in-person
teachers and mentors.

Without them,
there is
loss of community
and weakening
of social skills
from too much time
in the noosphere.

no·o·sphere

\ˈnō-ə-ˌsfir\

noun

a postulated sphere
or stage of evolutionary
development dominated
by consciousness, the mind,
and interpersonal relationships
(frequently with reference to the
writings of Teilhard de Chardin).

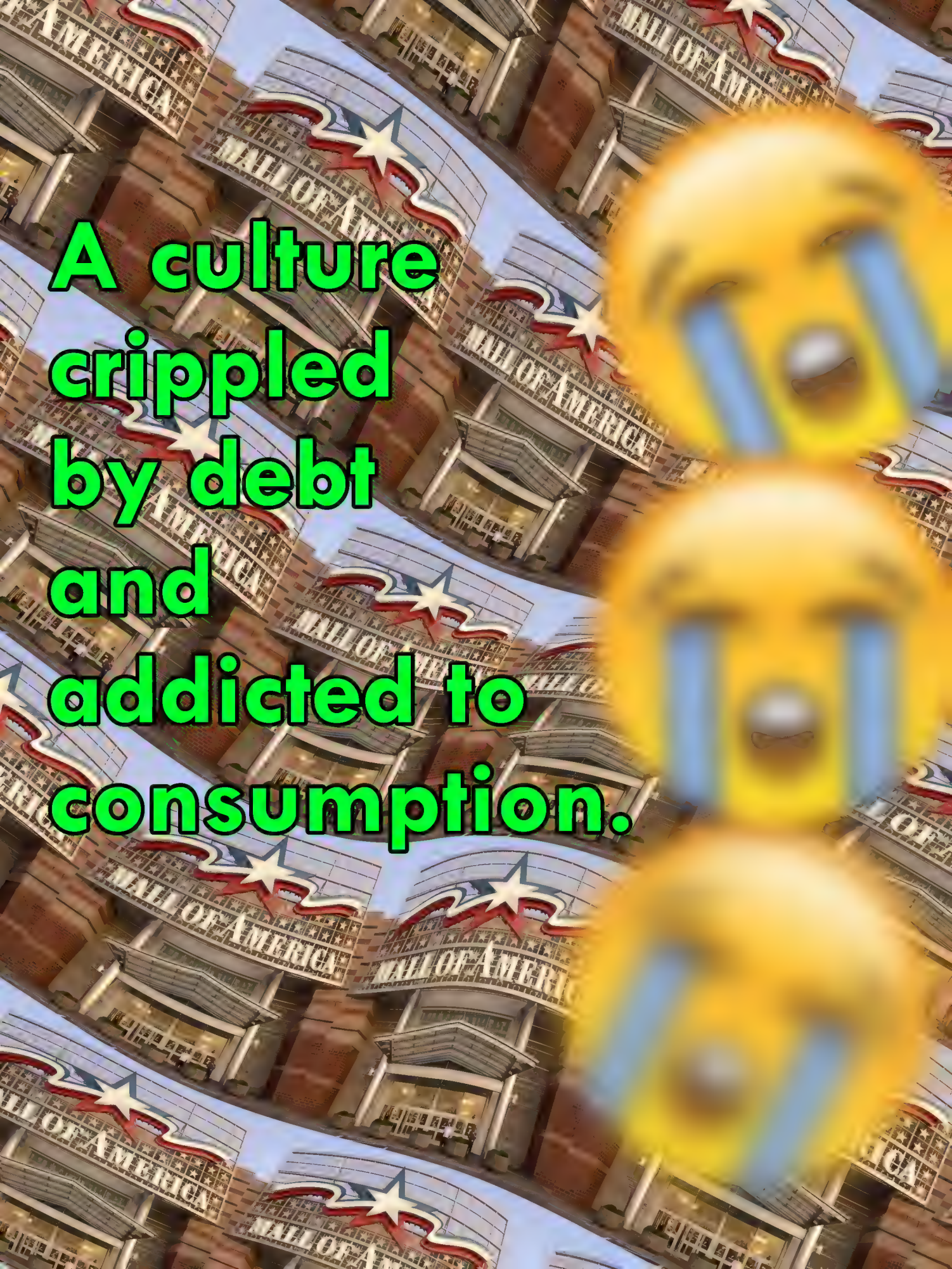
My children
are always online.

Steamrolled by Imagistic Avuncular and The Land of Screens, anti-intellectualism dominates the American landscape.

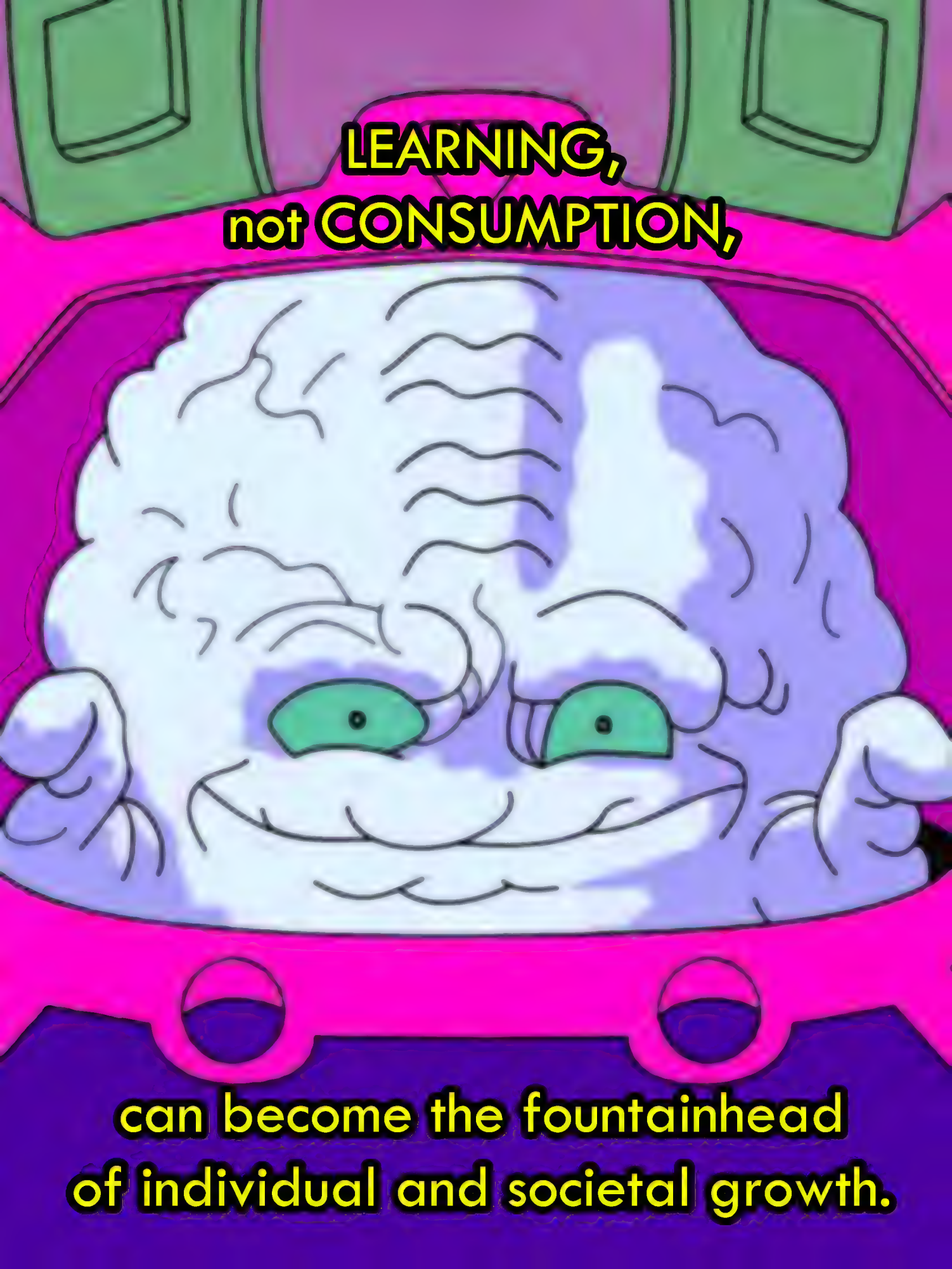
Traditional education is expensive
in the U.S. -
the average Class of 2016 graduate has
$37,172 in student loan debt.

Additionally, as the government carries the national debt, many households carry credit card debt.

As above,
so below.


A culture crippled by debt and addicted to consumption.

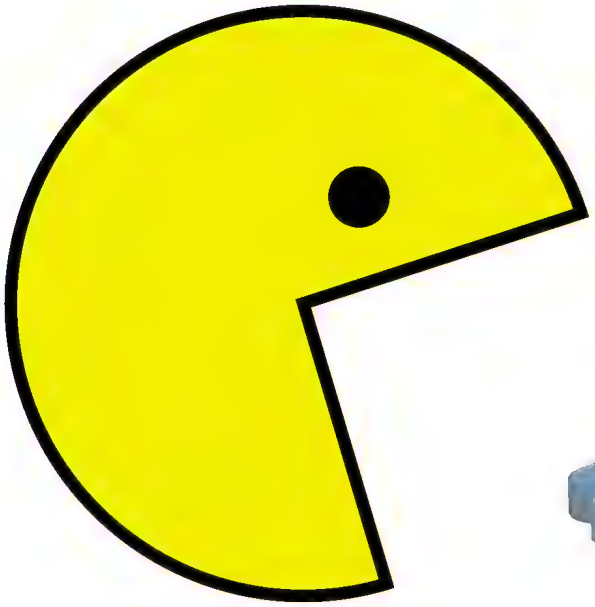
But it doesn't
have to be this way.


LEARNING,
not CONSUMPTION,
can become the fountainhead
of individual and societal growth.

Education increases employment and decreases the crime rate.

ATTENTION, X-MEN! THIS IS PROFESSOR XAVIER CALLING! REPEAT: THIS IS PROFESSOR X CALLING!
YOU ARE ORDERED TO APPEAR AT ONCE! CLASS IS NOW IN SESSION! TARDINESS WILL BE PUNISHED!

Less crime means less prisoners, lowering the tax bill for everyone.

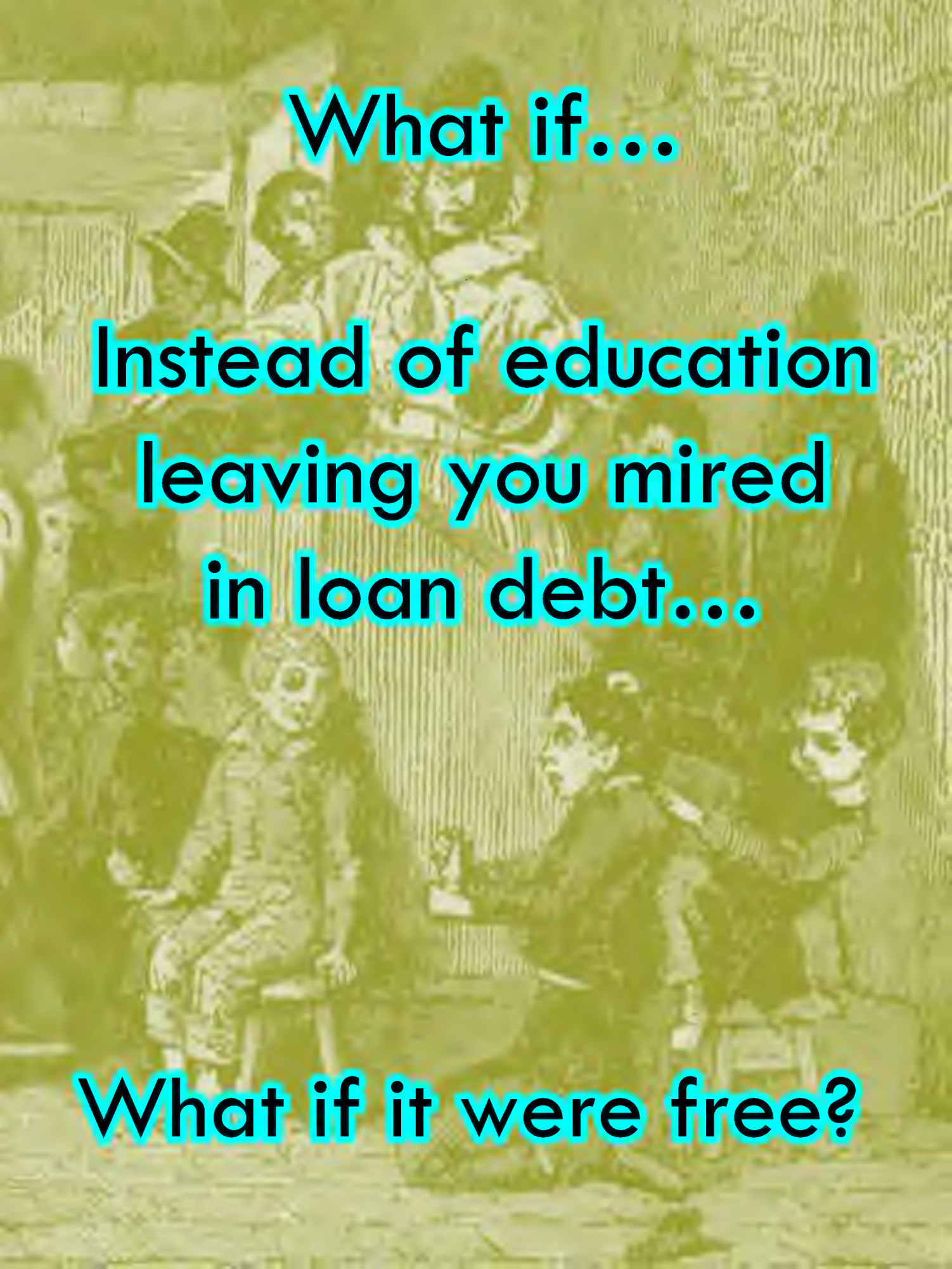


Average cost per year to keep a prisoner in the U.S. = $31,286.

Factory and construction jobs are already being replaced by robots.

Why force menial jobs
to continue?
Education can create new jobs
for in-demand industries:
Programming, Engineering,
Data Science, Robotics,
Medicine, Energy Science.
НА.

New literacies
open new worlds:
math,
music,
science,
programming...


What if...
Instead of education leaving you mired in loan debt...
What if it were free?

We can pay people
of all ages
to learn.

A GENERAL GOOD TIME

What if the school itself generated its own currency?

There are already
numerous alternate currencies in play:
Bitcoin, Dogecoin, Litecoin etc.

Plus the currencies and virtual goods
of video game worlds.

We can do something similar to gamify schools.

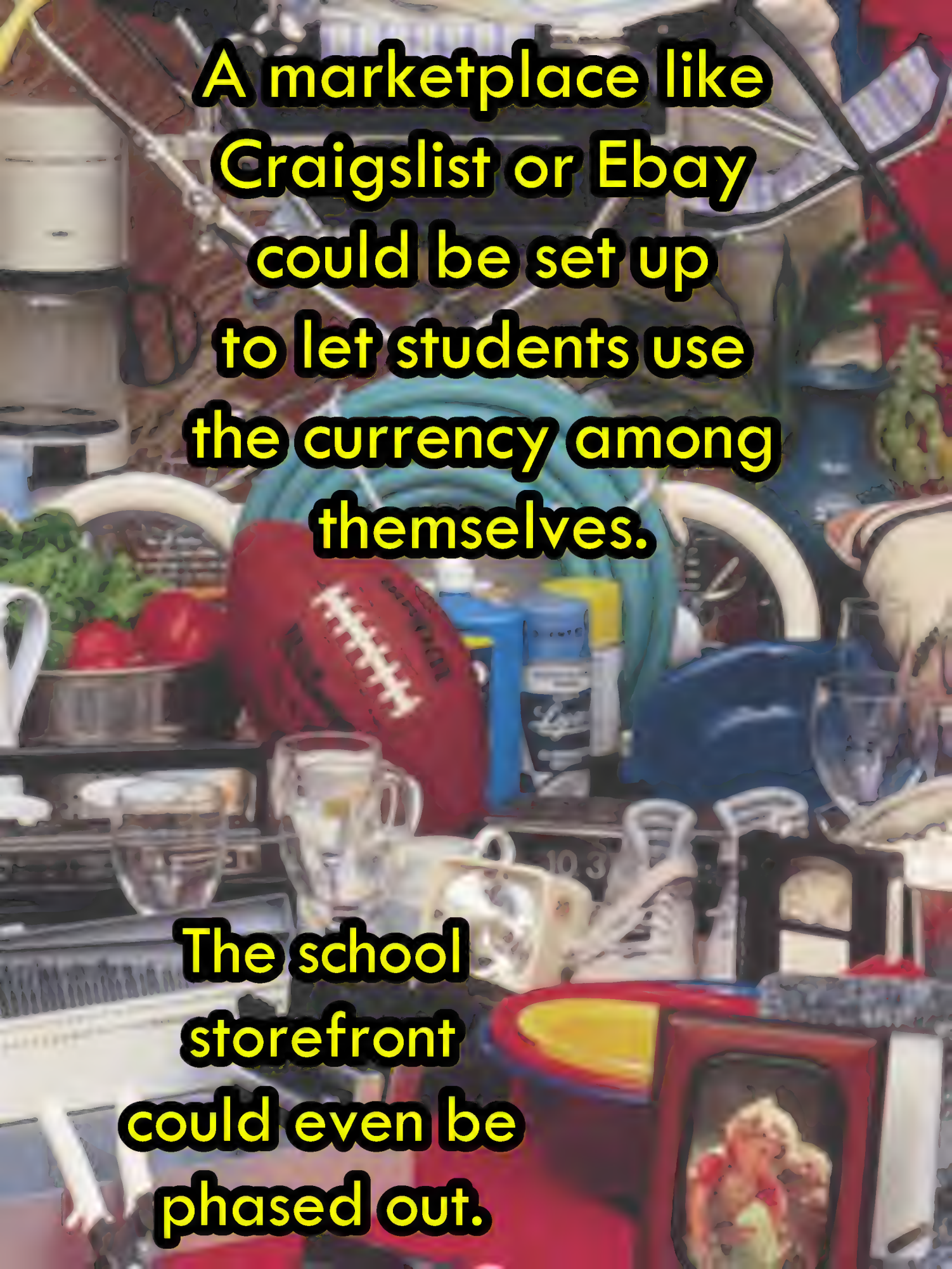
For example,
what if Google opened schools
in low-income neighborhoods
and developing countries (initially)?

Google

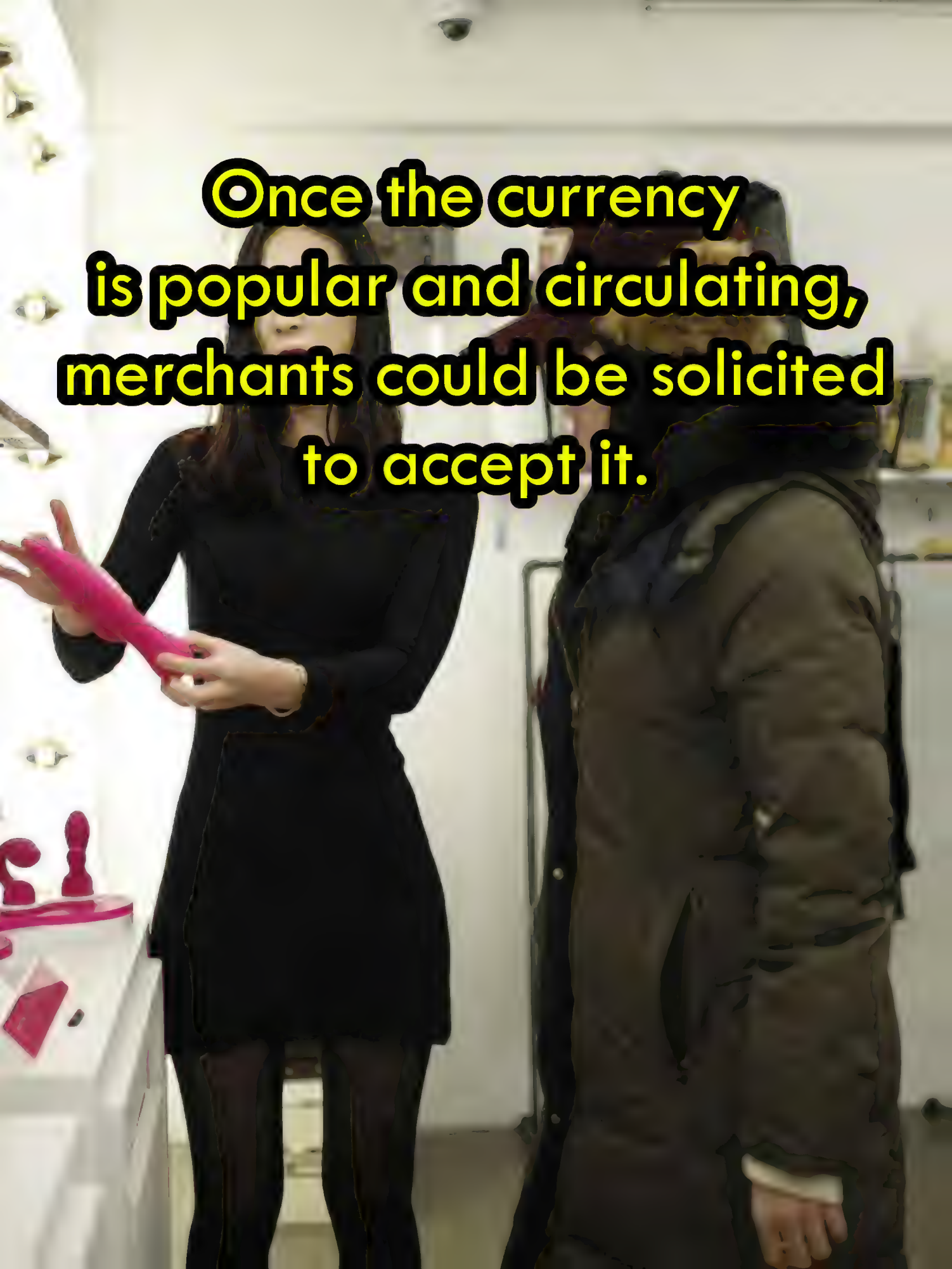
UNIVERSITY

Students would receive payments in Google's currency, which could be used to buy items from a Google store (online, or perhaps a physical building).

+


A marketplace like Craigslist or Ebay could be set up to let students use the currency among themselves.
The school storefront could even be phased out.

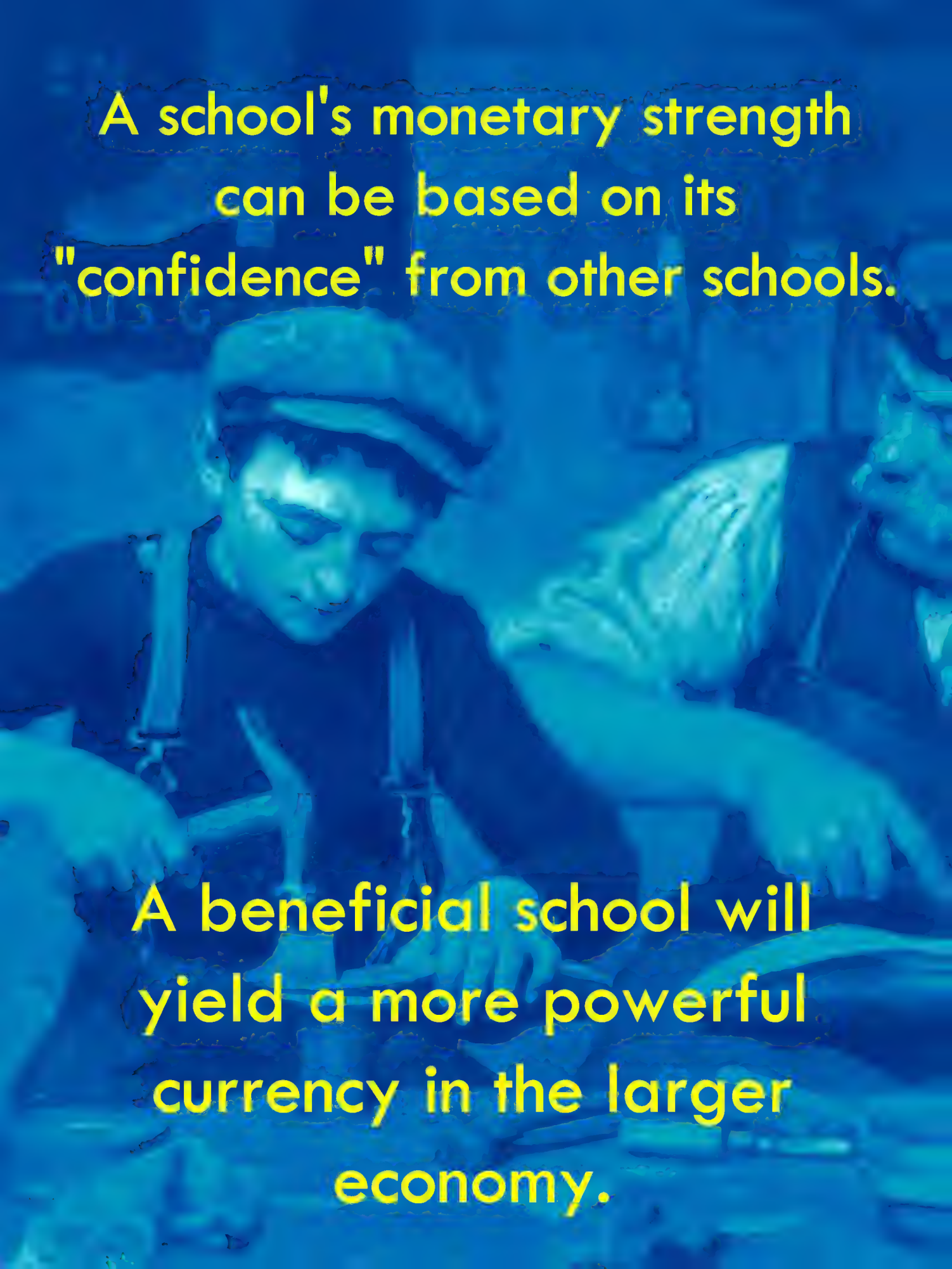
Monetary
institutions
may object.
Dance around them.


Once the currency
is popular and circulating,
merchants could be solicited
to accept it.

A further benefit to the school: It would have a hiring pool - potentially with test scores and other data, including an instructor's opinion.

The currency could interact with the currency of other schools on an exchange.

If a school chooses to.


A school's monetary strength
can be based on its
"confidence" from other schools.
A beneficial school will
yield a more powerful
currency in the larger
economy.

Another possibility:
Give the money an expiration date or rate of deflationary decay.
This will discourage hoarding and increase circulation.

Or use a low-tech non-dollar currency that naturally decays.

There are many variations. Experiment!
An alternative currency is unlikely
to replace the national currency
anytime soon,
but it will take dollars away
from political despots.

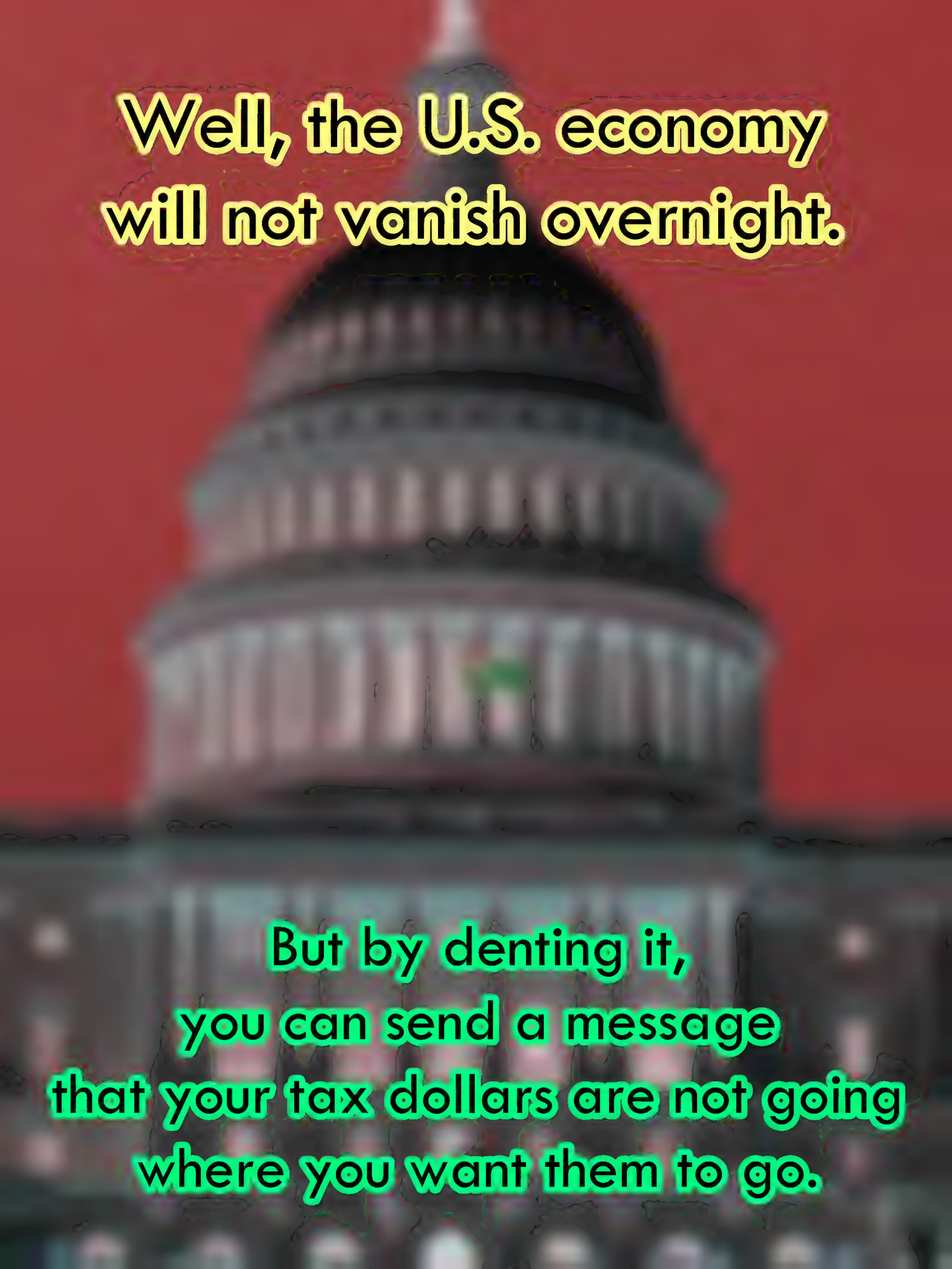
And if education-based currencies ever do replace a national currency, they will have effectively become a universal basic income.

In this sense, they act as safety nets for the "traditional" economy.

There are no rules to how money is used.
We can design it to fit our needs.
Paying for nuclear weapons
and debt interest
does not serve our needs
as 21st-century citizens.

Education and healthcare
are higher priorities.

But wait!
What about things
we need government for?
The roads!
The infrastructure!
Social security!
Environmental
and consumer protection!
Protecting nuclear arsenals!

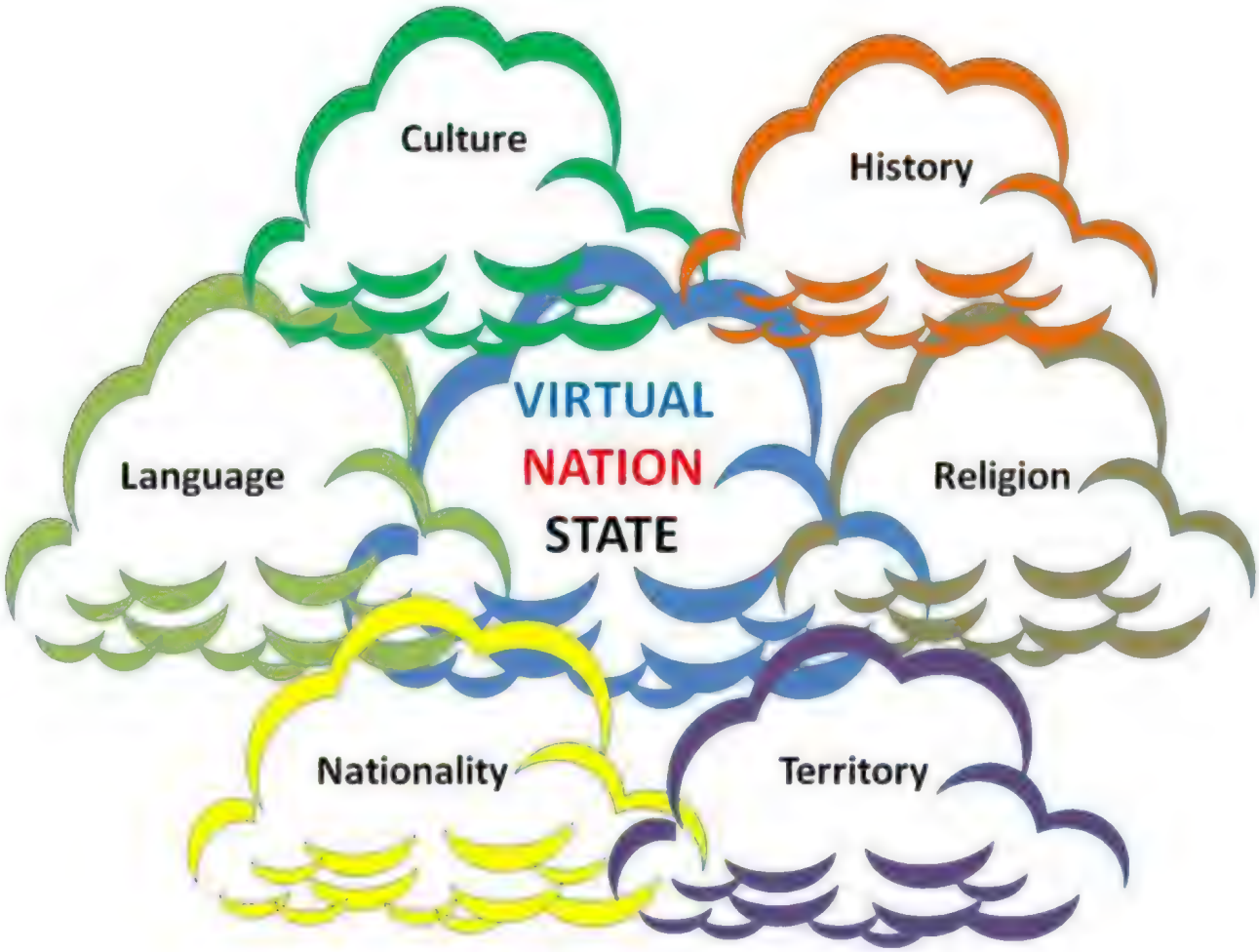

Well, the U.S. economy
will not vanish overnight.
But by denting it,
you can send a message
that your tax dollars are not going
where you want them to go.

Also, learning is the main tool for overcoming our challenges.

If we have more people learning and pondering these issues, solutions will emerge.

Such is the logic behind think tanks.
But too many think tanks
are funded by private interests,
at odds with the public good.
A local school can be a
community-driven
think tank.

The nation-state may be on its way out the door.

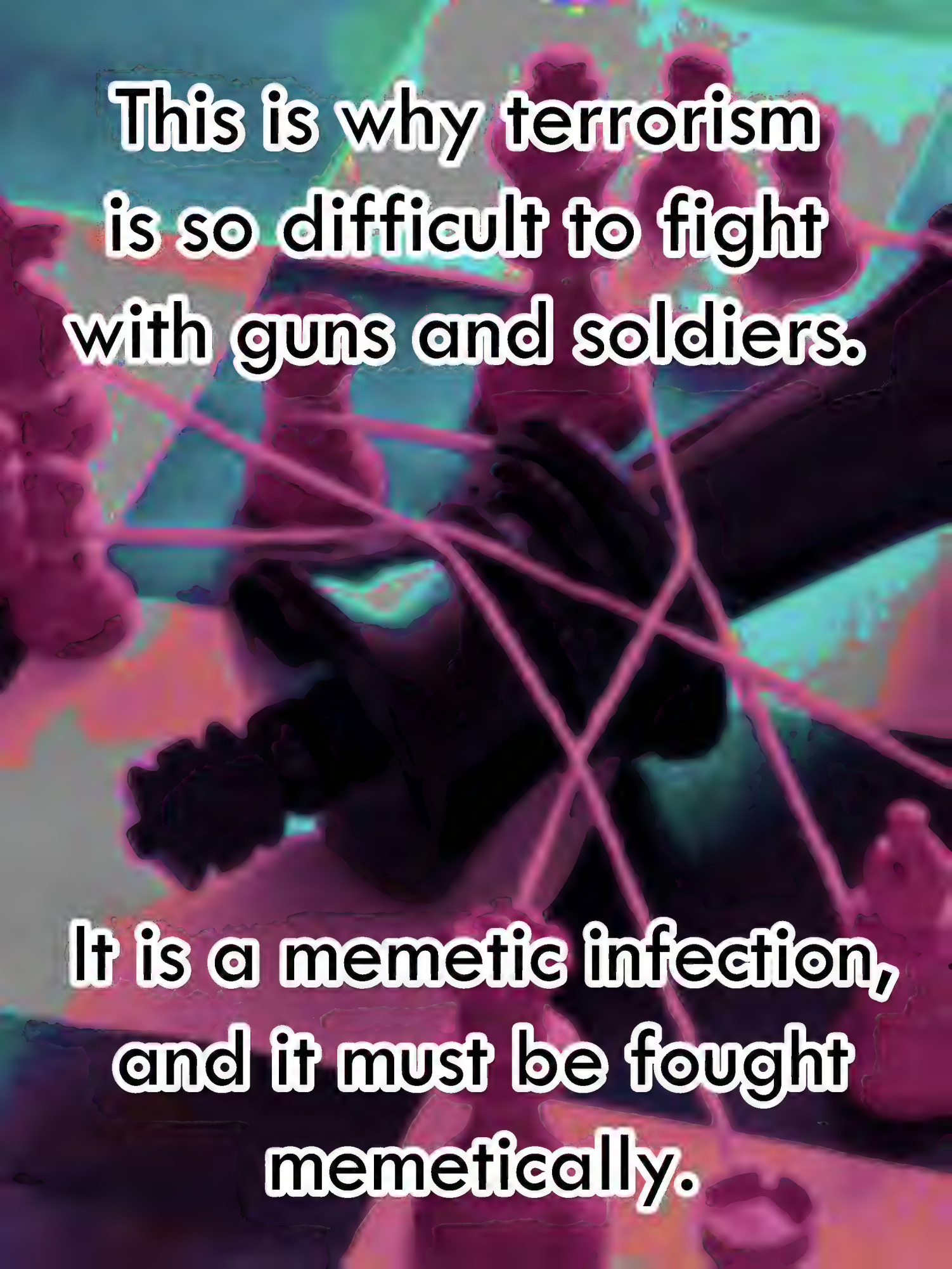


Perhaps it's time to write something
that will benefit individuals
and the environment,
not gangsters and plutocrats.

An organizational structure that can dethrone any political leader.

A decentralized structure
of cooperative cells
may also
be the best way
to protect against
terrorism.

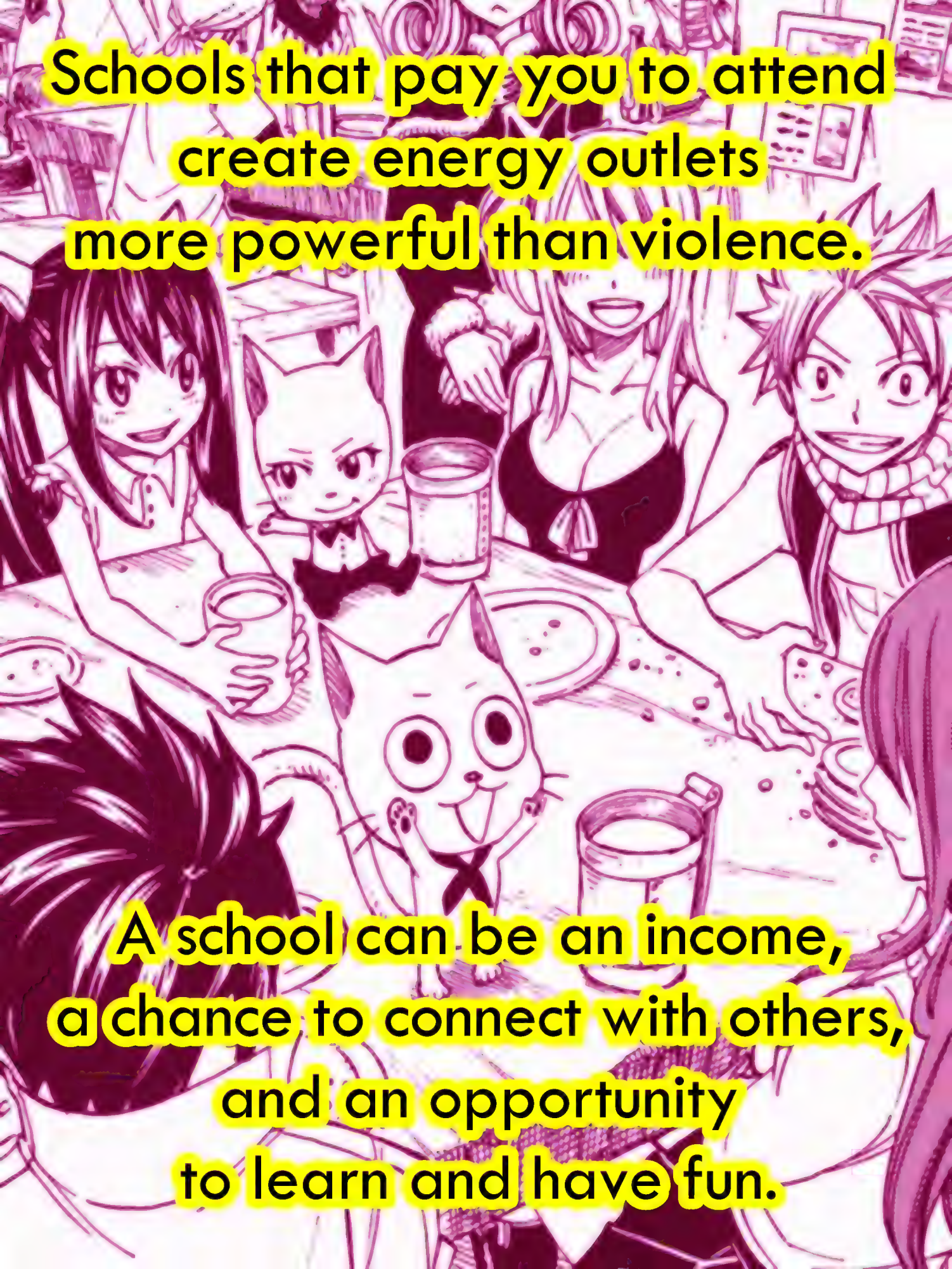
Our identities don't need to be tied to a physical location.
Decentralized collectives are more difficult to disrupt.


This is why terrorism is so difficult to fight with guns and soldiers.
It is a memetic infection, and it must be fought memetically.

Good ideas and opportunities are more coercive than soldiers and missiles.
The U.S. Department of Defense struggles to recognize this.
Mission creep continues.

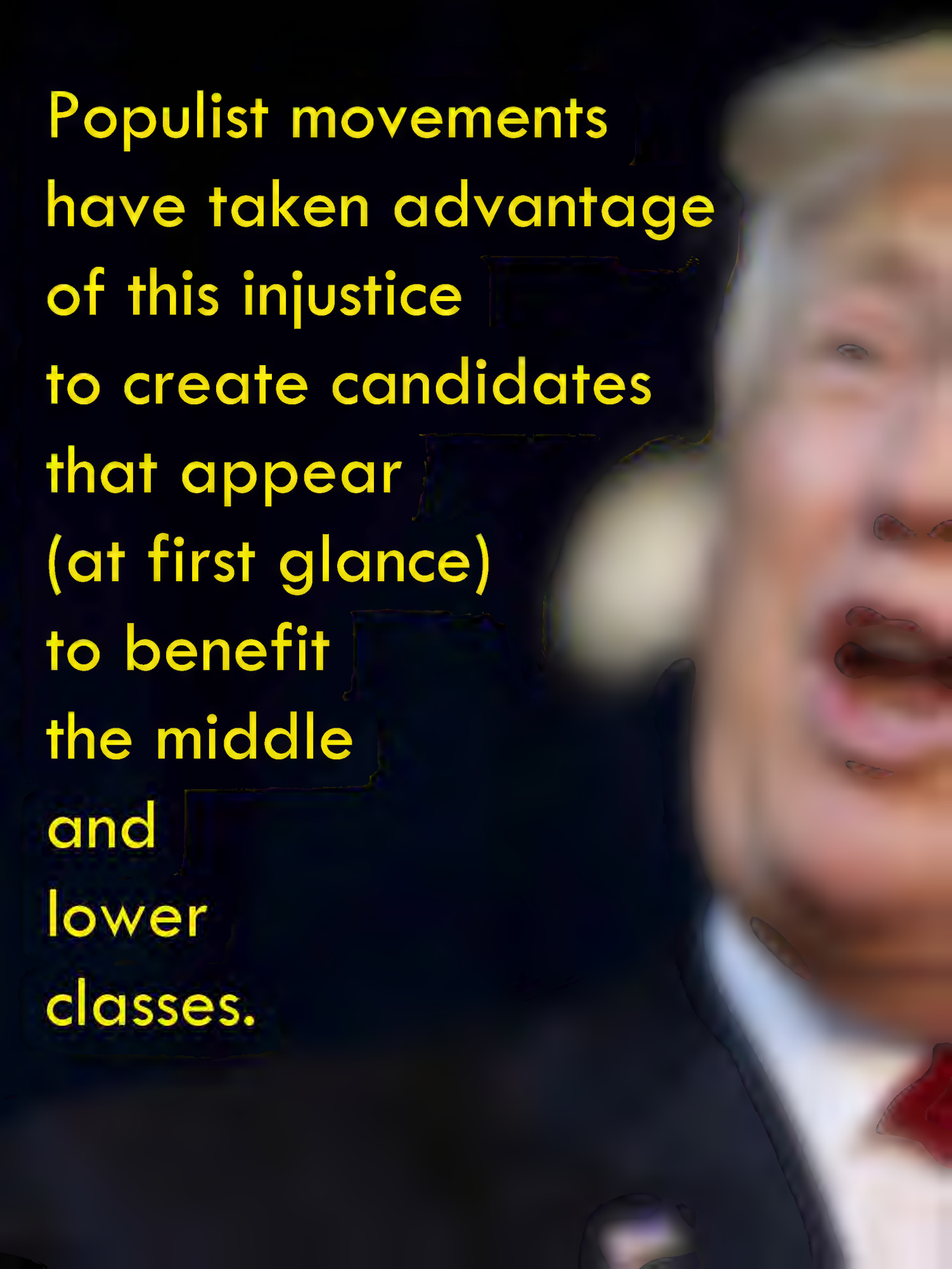
The U.S. Department of Defense is the largest employer on Earth.

It *might* remain relevant if it can transition from war to peace and not devour itself.

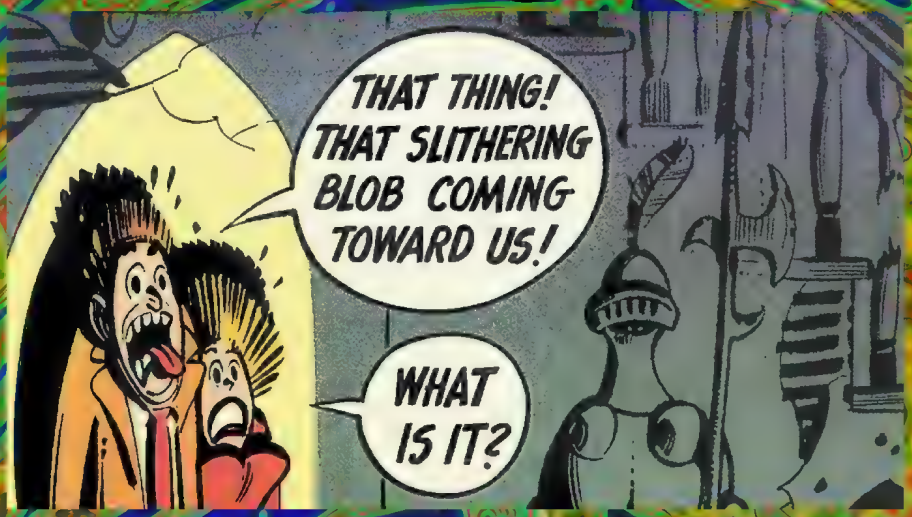

Schools that pay you to attend
create energy outlets
more powerful than violence.
A school can be an income,
a chance to connect with others,
and an opportunity
to learn and have fun.

The current economic model is a caste system based on money.

More money = more rights, more freedom.


Populist movements
have taken advantage
of this injustice
to create candidates
that appear
(at first glance)
to benefit
the middle
and
lower
classes.

This extremism preys on fear and ignorance.

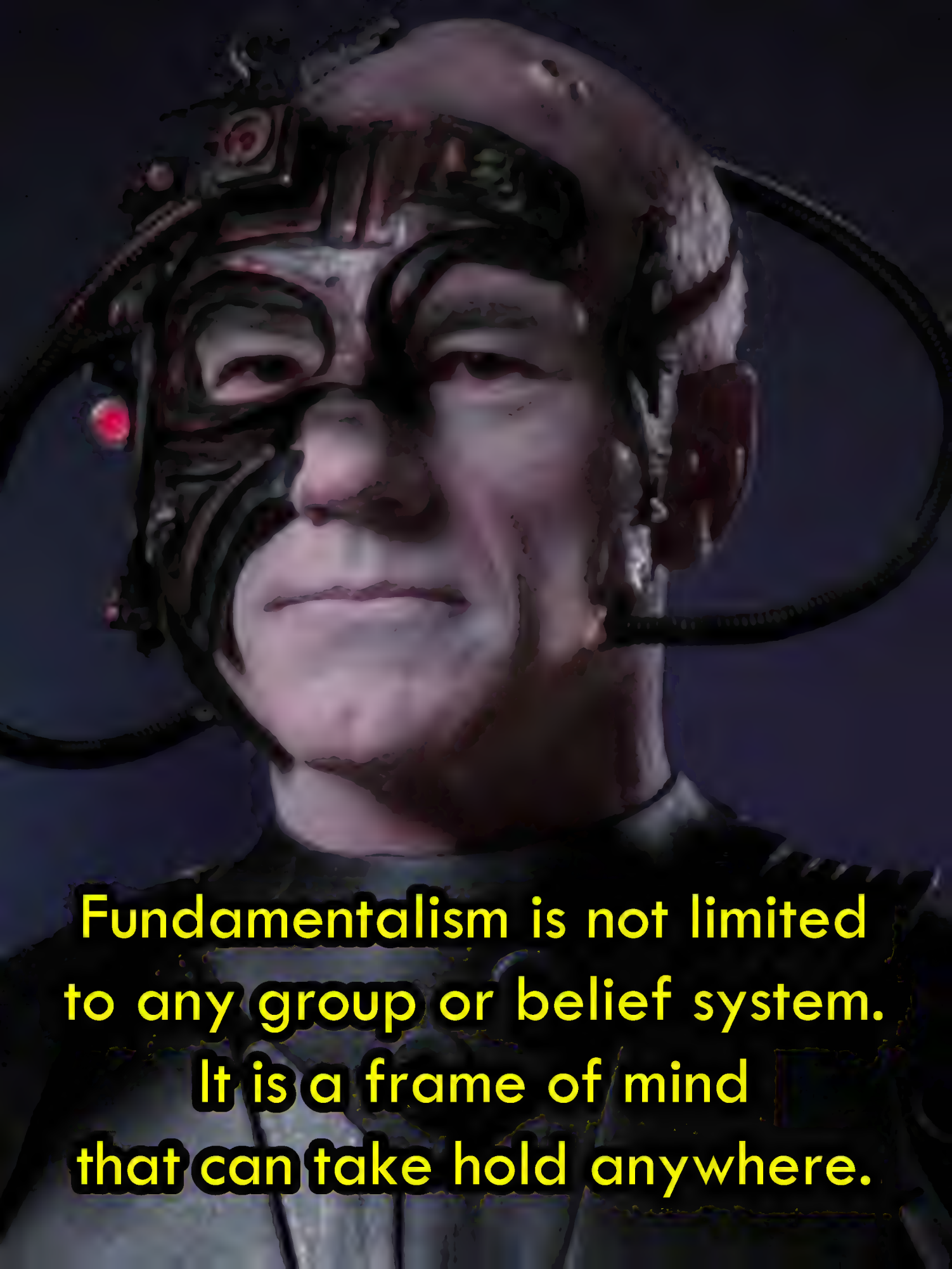


Someone can always be blamed.

Hate can always be stirred.

The Us vs. Them mentality:
our primate inheritance.

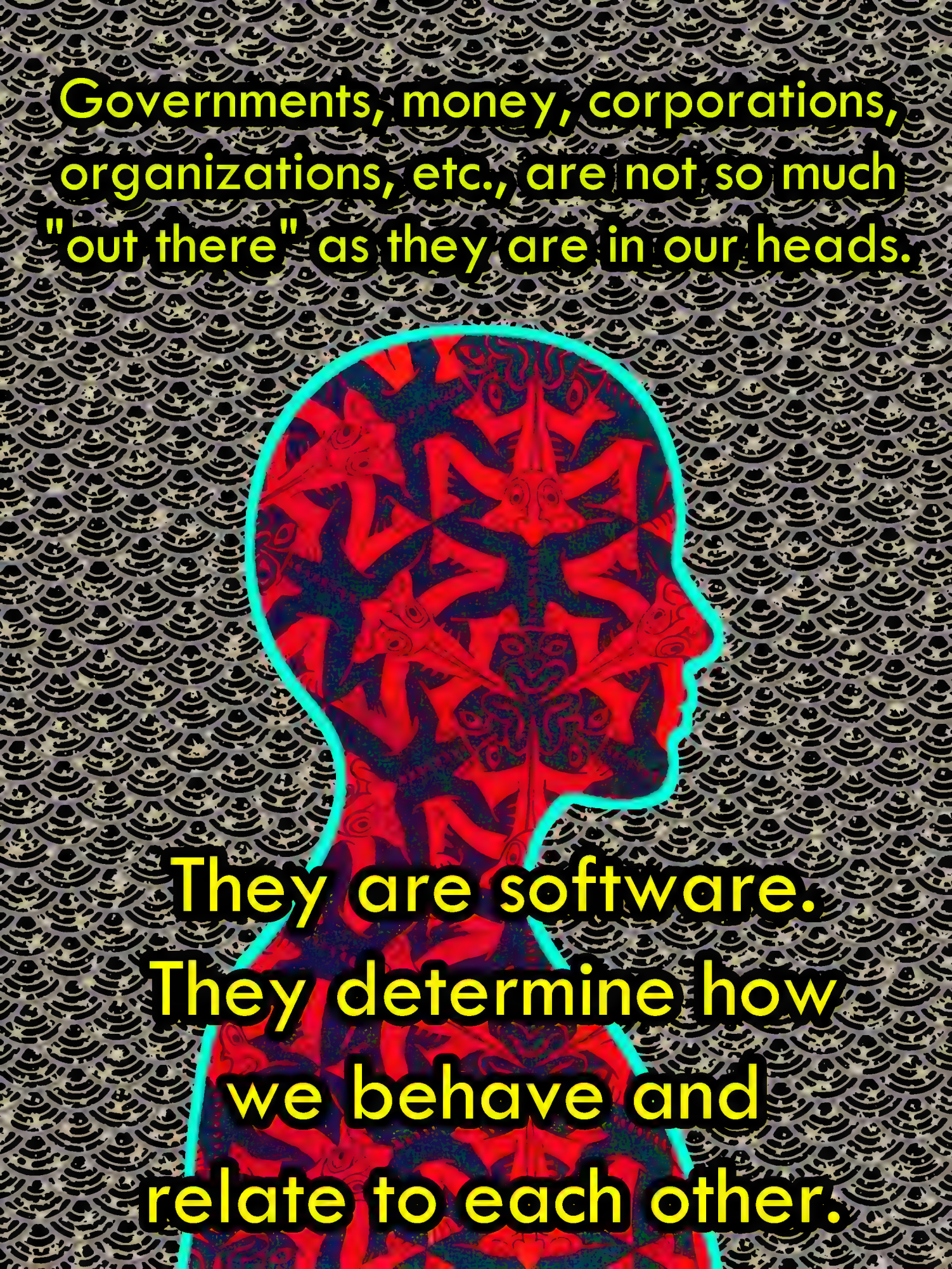
Ironically, those most subject to monkey mind
are those who doubt our relation
to the great apes.
HOLY
BIBLE


Fundamentalism is not limited
to any group or belief system.
It is a frame of mind
that can take hold anywhere.

Education is what allows
people to move beyond
fundamentalism.
This requires no magical thinking.
New literacies provide tools
and fresh perspectives
for a growth mindset.

15
Money in its present form is infected with authoritarianism, conformity, oppression, and violence.
We can infect it with humor, compassion, peace, and creativity.

Governments, money, corporations, organizations, etc., are not so much "out there" as they are in our heads.



They are software. They determine how we behave and relate to each other.

But we can make their
money *useless*
at any time.
This frightens them.

2017:
Every Uber or Lyft driver I speak to does not respect Uber or Lyft as a company.
Uber and Lyft do not care about their employees.*
This is not community interaction – this is capitalism and its grinding gears.
* Did I say employees? I'm sorry - I meant serfs.

People send their money
thousands of miles away
to interact with
their own community.

Money cannot be our go-to way of interacting.
The hardest job kids face today is learning good manners without seeing any.
- Fred Astaire

Saluting the wisdom traditions
of the past.
Asking that more wisdom
be allowed to come through.

New spores of growth
may emerge.

You can talk to the universe
in as many ways
as there are to talk.

You don't get there by being ready.

You get there by going there.

Keep
pushing
on.

LOOK AT SOME OTHER THINGS
TO SEE WHAT THE OTHER BRINGS.

RECOMMENDED READING

War No More - Lawrence Rosenthal, editor
Throwing Rocks at the Google Bus - Douglas Rushkoff
The One World Schoolhouse - Salman Khan
The Attention Merchants - Tim Wu
The Zero Marginal Cost Society - Jeremy Rifkin
Sapiens - Yuval Noah Harari
The Art of Asking - Amanda Palmer
Wonderland - Steven Johnson
The Medium is the Massage - Marshall McLuhan
Better Angels of Our Nature - Steven Pinker
Inevitable - Kevin Kelly
The Meme Machine - Susan Blackmore
Reality is Broken - Jane McGonigal
How Everything Became War
and the Military Became Everything - Rosa Brooks

About the Otter

My name's Adam Savage,
Don't call me Adam Sausage,
Or I'll make you eat a cabbage,
And not give you a beverage.

Take my free course to start making comics:
udemy.com/start-making-comics/

YouTube youtube.com/adamsavageland

@savageatom

patreon.com/adamsavage

Real quotes from real readers

"That was like a TED talk!"
"That was like the best sex I've ever had!"
"That was like eating my enemy's heart with a pulpy sauce!"
"Mmm, so good. Mmm. Mmm."

Released February 27, 2017